LIBRARY OF PRINCETON
11.16.31
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

HQ 35 .S85
Stewart, Frederick William
A study of adolescent
development

A Study of Adolescent Development

LIBRARY OF PRINCETON
NOV 16 1931
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

SPECIALIZATION TEXT FOR THE STANDARD LEADERSHIP TRAINING COURSE

By FREDERICK W. STEWART

ELECTIVE UNIT

PRINTED FOR
THE LEADERSHIP TRAINING PUBLISHING ASSOCIATION
BY
THE JUDSON PRESS
PHILADELPHIA
BOSTON CHICAGO LOS ANGELES
KANSAS CITY SEATTLE TORONTO

973

Copyright, 1929, by
THE JUDSON PRESS

Published April, 1929

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

To

JOHN LINCOLN
ELIZABETH MARY
BRUCE ALEXANDER
HILDA ESTHER

My Dear Children, Who Teach Me My Best Lessons in Religious Education

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

The progress made in Religious Education in the local church during the past decade will probably stand out as one of the most phenomenal developments of modern church history. During this period the fifty denominations in the International Council of Religious Education have faced more seriously than ever before the program of Christianity in terms of the religious development of the individual as well as his place in society.

A skilled educational leadership has been discovered. Plans have been laid for an educational procedure comparable to that of the best in the public schools. Thorough-going educational standards are being developed to guide schools in the direction of housing, choice of equipment, organization, administration, and supervision. A comprehensive study of the curriculum is being made, based on the most recent discoveries of teaching method. In a word, preparations are well under way for the development of real schools of religion in the local church.

It is evident that the success of such an educational enterprise depends upon a well-trained lead-

ership. Thus, side by side with the growth of educational standards such as those referred to above, the development of standards of leadership training has gone forward in an ever-enlarging way. So that there are now available three grades of leadership curriculum: the so-called original Standard Leadership Curriculum, to which have been added more recently the High School Leadership Curriculum and the Advanced Leadership Curriculum. Special provision is being made increasingly for adequate courses of study covering the entire scope of this work.

Noteworthy in the preparation of leadership-training texts is the increased emphasis on the development of thorough-going skill in teaching secured through carefully supervised practise teaching. Emphasis has also shifted from the study of a given text-book to that of the course of study, the mastery of which may involve reference readings in many text-books and information gathered through observation and study beyond the limits of the material contained in the text-book used.

The Standard Leadership Curriculum is organized on the basis of subject units of not less than ten lessons each. A minimum of twelve units is necessary to secure the Standard Leadership Diploma. Of the twelve units, nine are required and three are elective. Of the nine required

units, six are general units, and three are specialization units covering the work of the various departmental age-groupings in the church school.

This volume, "A Study of Adolescent Development," is one of the specialization units of the Standard Leadership Training Curriculum.

The text-books of the Standard Leadership Curriculum are prepared under the supervision of the Editorial and Educational Committee representing the denominations cooperating in the Teacher Training Publishing Association. Only writers especially qualified through educational training and teaching experience are chosen to prepare the text-books for these courses.

For the Teacher Training Publishing Association,
Editorial and Educational Committee,

C. A. HAUSER.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

This text-book has been prepared to meet a specific need, namely, to serve those leadership-training classes throughout the country in assembly, in community, and in individual church that wish to study adolescence in a single course. For those desiring it, fuller treatment of the different divisions of the subject has already been given in other texts of this series. Obviously the approach has had to be psychological, yet the author disclaims any attempt to write a strictly scientific Psychology of Adolescence. Others have done this sufficiently well. Moreover and quite frankly such originality as may appear lies wholly in the manner of presentation.

Rather the attempt has been made to make available to teachers and to students, a very large proportion of whom may be without much previous technical training, some of the findings of psychology concerning these fascinating young people, in terms of their religious significance and their practical bearing. Hence technical terms have been largely avoided, but not wholly, for it is felt that those capable of making the study at all with any profit will welcome the opportunity to enlarge

their vocabulary. Trained persons should become teachers of the book, not students, and should enrich it much with their own knowledge of the matter.

For let it be recognized that the subject is too big for adequate treatment in so brief a text. At most we have but a handy manual. In consequence many statements are made that will seem dogmatic in tone for want of space to support or to prove them. Psychological positions have had to be assumed without defensive argument, though they may at once be open to debate. One purpose runs through the book, namely, to help leaders of youth to understand the nature of the young people with whom they have to deal, in order that they may the better aid in their development in efficient social living and in Christ-likeness of personality. Other texts of this series already published deal commendably with the materials and the methods of this responsible task.

While this book has been written and will be published in the United States, it may perhaps be used also by Canadian study classes fostered by the International Council of Religious Education. The author has worked with young people on both sides of the international boundary-line, and knows that such differences as may exist between

those on either side are largely superficial. It is hoped, therefore, that the book may be kindly received by Canadian readers, in spite of its American coloring, and that it may prove helpful wherever it may be used.

The writer is indebted to too many authors, teachers, and young people to make more than a most general and grateful acknowledgment. He is, however, especially under obligations to those kindly denominational critics, unknown to him by name, who read the first rough draft of the manuscript and enriched the book by their valuable comments.

Certain suggestions to teachers, which may prove of value, follow this preface.

FREDERICK W. STEWART.

DENISON UNIVERSITY,
JANUARY 1, 1929.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS

1. Students should be at least late adolescents themselves. Younger ones had better be refused enrolment.

2. During the course, have your students keep specific young people in mind for observation and for illustration. This will require adolescents of each period, early, middle, and late.

3. It would be of great value if there could be a brief written report from each member of the class making the study, applying the previous lesson to these particular adolescents. Or the class might be divided into groups or committees to prepare these reports.

4. Or another form of report might consist of a series of chapters, following the chapters of this book, on the general topic, " My Own Adolescence in the Light of this Study."

5. If possible, have the class make practical use of each lesson before the time of the next one. This means that weekly sessions are best for such a study as this. Let each member of the class report briefly one reaction or observation.

6. If the class will really study each chapter as assigned, the teacher may assume this and make

valuable use of the allotted time, by discussion, reports of actual situations, and so forth.

7. Admit that each principle stated may be subject to exception, but do not waste time in lengthy discussion of these exceptional cases.

8. Do not fail to make a careful assignment of each coming lesson.

9. Emphasize the idea that this study is at best introductory, and encourage further reading and investigation, making special reference to the bibliography.

GENERAL BIBLIOGRAPHY

The books in this list are but a few of those available and valuable. They may be consulted for matters dealt with in several chapters each. For this reason they will not be listed in every case where they may be used. The reader is referred for further study to the bibliography to be found in The Standard Leadership Training Curriculum, Educational Bulletin No. 3, published by the International Council of Religious Education. Another valuable list of books was published in *Religious Education,* December, 1927.

Annett, E. A.: "Psychology for Bible Teachers." Scribners, 1925.

Coe, G. A.: "A Social Theory of Religious Education." Scribners, 1917.

Coe, G. A.: "The Psychology of Religion." U. of Chicago, 1916.

Gates, A. I.: "Elementary Psychology." Macmillan, 1925.

Hickman, F. S.: "Introduction to the Psychology of Religion." Abingdon, 1926.

Josey, C. C.: "Psychology of Religion." Macmillan, 1927.

Moxcey, Mary E.: "Girlhood and Character." Abingdon, 1916.

——: "Psychology of Middle Adolescence." Methodist Book Concern, 1925.

Mudge, E. L.: "Varieties of Adolescent Experience." Century, 1926.

——: "Psychology of Early Adolescence." Methodist Book Concern, 1922.

——: "Psychology of Later Adolescence." Methodist Book Concern, 1926.

Munro, H. C.: "Agencies for the Religious Education of Adolescents." Bethany Press, 1926.

Peckstein-McGregor: "Psychology of the High School Student."

Richardson, N. E.: "The Religious Education of Adolescents." Abingdon, 1918.

Slattery, M.: "The Girl in Her Teens." Pilgrim, 1910.

Tracy, F.: "Psychology of Adolescence." Macmillan, 1922.

Woodworth, R. S.: "Psychology." Holt, 1921.

CONTENTS

PAGE

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS xiii

I. THE PSYCHOLOGICAL BASIS 1

I. The Nature of the New-born Babe: Physical Characteristics and Possibilities—Intellectual Capacities—Social and Spiritual Capacities—Temperament—Distribution of General Intelligence Within the Group—Acquired Characteristics. II. Human Nature's Great Capacity for Change: Cultivation of Socially Desirable Tendencies—Sublimation—Inhibition. III. How Human Nature Develops: Native Tendency or Impulse Given Direction by Stimulus—Development Through Social Interaction—Experience that Incites to Action May Be Personal or Vicarious—Which Stimulus Will Determine Action?—The Contribution of Religious Education. IV. The Specific Relation to Adolescence.

II. THE MEANING AND DIVISIONS OF ADOLESCENCE 22

I. One of Life's Major Crises: Relation to Other Crisis Experiences—The Time Limits of Adolescence—Signs of the Adolescent Change. II. Mental Aspect of Adolescence: General Characteristics of the Period—Development Is Socially Conditioned—Other Characteristics—The Youth Attains Selfhood. III. The Social Aspects of Adolescence: Expanding Social Horizons—Both Less and More of an Individual—Adolescent Religion as Social

PAGE

Experience. IV. The Divisions of Adolescence: Early—Middle—Later.

III. THE ANTECEDENTS OF ADOLESCENCE.. 40

I. The Biological Inheritance: Racial Inheritance — Individual Inheritance — General Intelligence—Instincts. II. The Social Inheritance: Richness of the Heritage—Some Particular Elements of the Heritage. III. The Characteristics of Late Childhood: Physical Characteristics—Mental Characteristics—Social and Religious Characteristics—IV. As Adolescence Begins.

IV. THE PHYSICAL ASPECTS OF ADOLESCENCE 59

I. General Aspects: Physical Signs of Its Approach—Rate of Growth—Relation to Sex. II. Particular Physical Aspects of Adolescence: Height—Weight and Girth—Brain and Nervous System—Other Organs. III. Other Relations: Environment and the Physical Life—Liability to Disease—Health and Normal Religious Experience.

V. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SEX..... 77

I. The Physical Basis: Development of the Reproductive System—Blessings and Dangers —Suggestions for Developing Self-control—Physical Aids. II. Sublimation of the Sex Impulse: The Sex Urge May Find Other Outlet—Examples of Sublimation—Opportunity of the Church. III. The Social Significance of Sex: The Love Motive—Wider Social Relations—Social Relations of the Sexes—Characteristic Traits in Courtship—Marriage and Parenthood. IV. The Religious Significance of Sex.

PAGE

VI. THE LIFE OF FEELING 96

I. The Meaning and Function of Emotion: The Nature of Emotion—Feeling Tends to Reveal Itself in Appropriate Action—Feeling Settles into an Established Behavior Trend—Primary and Derived Emotions—Pedagogical Significance. II. The Emotional Life of Adolescence: Adolescent Emotions Stronger and More Refined—The New Basis—Emotional Life of Each Period—Opportunities and Dangers in the Emotional Life—Adolescence and Worship. III. Attitudes: Where Attitudes Come From—How Attitudes May Be Deliberately Modified or Acquired.

VII. THE INTELLECTUAL ASPECTS OF ADOLESCENCE 118

I. The Thinking Process: How We Acquire Ideas—The Process of Analysis—The Social Contribution to Thinking—Thinking and Behavior. II. The Mind of the Adolescent: Attaining Maturity — Reason — Imagination — Judgment—Interests—Mental Activity Versus Stagnation. III. Intellectual Life of Each Period of Adolescence: Early Adolescence—Middle Adolescence—Later Adolescence. IV. Adolescent Doubts.

VIII. THE AGE OF DECISION 137

I. Making Decisions: How Decision Is Reached—The Elements of Decision. II. Life's Great Decisions: Decision as Adjustment to Life's Conditions—Religion—Life Companion—Life-work.

PAGE

IX. THE ADOLESCENT AND SOCIETY..... 156

I. The Place of the Adolescent in Society: Youth in Primitive Society—Youth in Our Society. II. Relation of Youth to the Principal Social Institutions: The Home—School—Church—Social Groups—Community and Nation—Industry—Recreational Life. III. Personal Relations to Society.

X. THE RELIGION OF ADOLESCENCE..... 176

I. The Meaning of Religion: The Search for Highest Values—Religion as a Social Relationship—The Aim of Religious Education. II. Religion in Adolescence: Religion Develops in the Individual—Adolescent Expansion—The Peak of Interest. III. The Elements of Adolescent Religion in Particular: Sense of Sin—Conversion—Adolescent Doubts—Prayer Life—Worship—Doctrine—Consecration. IV. Practical Considerations: Relation to the Church—Techniques of Adolescent Religious Experience and Their Values—Religious Activity for Young People—Agencies Within the Church.

CHAPTER I

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL BASIS

Life is like a flowing stream, never like a stagnant pool. Every period of it is a time of transition. Sometimes, as with the stream, the flow is rapid, and again it settles to slower pace, but always it moves on and on. In like manner, character is fixed but for the moment; it is forever becoming. Our interest in adolescence, which is one of life's periods of most manifest change, is twofold: what the adolescent has already become out of his past, and what he may yet become in the future. This is obviously too large a theme for this brief study, so we shall confine our discussion to the religious aspects of adolescence. We shall, however, think of the term "religious" very broadly, not merely as creed or institution or devotional practise, but as including every spiritual or social relationship. And since life is a unity, some notice should be taken of all its manifestations that bear on the religious. The scope of our study is still very large.

The first chapter will be devoted to the general process of becoming, the psychological basis of the matter.

I. NATURE OF THE NEW-BORN BABE

It is almost startling to realize how irretrievably fixed is the whole biological inheritance from

the moment the two cells unite from which comes the babe.

1. **Physical Characteristics and Possibilities.** The coloring of hair, eyes, and skin are all determined. This is in part a racial matter, so that Africans are normally black, Chinese yellow, American Indians red. Of the white peoples, Nordics are blonds and Latins brunettes. But with the intermingling of the races, there appear variations even within the same family. In every case, however, whether racial or individual, the coloring is fixed before birth. What the skeletal structure shall be is also already relatively settled; for example, the size and weight of the bones and the shape of the head. And the mature length of bones makes one man tall and another short. Conditions after birth may stunt the full growth, but we know of no means of adding to the maximum height determined for each one before birth. Again the inherited potentialities of muscle and of organs set the limits of development that may be achieved through practise and exercise. One seems born to be a football-player, while nothing can ever make a real athlete out of another. Caruso came into the world with the unique structure of throat that made it possible for him to become the world's greatest tenor, but no training could ever have made him a bass. So for each one the physical bounds are set beyond which he may not go. This is the meaning of Jesus' query, "Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto the measure of his stature?"

2. Intellectual Capacities. In like manner we have been discovering that our intellectual capacities, which we inherit, are not unlimited, but are very definitely fixed as to their maximum limit, from the first moment of life. Tests have been devised that reveal to us the measure of our general intelligence and of our special traits. Training and experience may carry us to the limits of these native capacities, but never beyond. One babe may some day be a genius, another must remain in the average crowd, while no education can possibly raise a third above the level of moron. To be sure we have been learning that through training there are possibilities for the moron of which our fathers little dreamed. Yet with the best that educational science can do he must always remain a moron. Capacity for reasoning and judgment, capacity for music and the arts, capacity for scientific inquiry of various sorts, or for mechanics—some degree of these and many others are the equipment with which the new-born babe faces life, and the limits of each may be fixed anywhere within a very wide range. Also within any person may be found a great variation in the several abilities. One might be at the same time a musical monotone, unable to carry a tune of any sort, a mechanical jack-of-all-trades, with a knack for doing many things after a fashion, and a linguistic genius, capable of mastering easily many languages. No two will be found with identical combination of capacities, and this in part is what makes us individuals. A very in-

teresting study might here be made of the varying combinations of intellectual capacities and special traits within a given family, children of the same parentage.

3. **Social and Spiritual Capacities.** The capacity to live effectively, happily, and ethically with one's fellow men, and the capacity to enter into fellowship with the divine are essentially the capacity to appreciate the values involved in social interaction. This is the capacity summarized by Paul, when he said, "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things" (Phil. 4:8). Only a man with real social capacity can appreciate the true, honorable, just, pure, and lovely things of life. This capacity also is inborn and varies through a wide range in the human family. An Abraham Lincoln comes into the world capable of the highest degree of social virtue, self-control, judgment, and magnanimity, while a great mass of people are incapable of rising beyond self-interest, and always need external guidance and control. It is for this latter class that laws have to be made and police forces maintained, in order to compel them to live more ethically than their native social capacity would demand.

Again, revelation comes to the Isaiahs and Pauls, to the Luthers, the Wesleys, and the Moodys, because they are spiritual geniuses, born with power for spiritual discernment and appre-

ciation, with capacity to feel awe and wonder, mystery, fear, and love, with an emotional and temperamental organization that makes possible a mystical approach to the divine. At the other end of the line are those who have the most meager equipment for knowing God, who of their own accord can scarcely rise beyond the most childish conceptions and superstition, whose social outreach is limited to their immediate environment. This range of native spiritual power is the truth that lies back of Jesus' parable of the talents. And where much is given, much may also be required.

4. **Temperament.** The study of temperament, the disposition that determines the type of our action, has not advanced as far as some other phases of psychology, yet enough has been done to show that here, too, the pattern of our lives is relatively fixed from birth. Speed of decision, speed of action, assurance, care for detail, tenacity, susceptibility to social stimulation, and other traits, do not change materially, and these go far to determine the sorts of person men are. There is little use, therefore, in attempting to be some one other than you are. Picture a Coolidge trying to be a Roosevelt, or the reverse. Imagine a Douglass Fairbanks trying to be a Pershing. It is impossible. When Commander Byrd chose the men who were to accompany him on his Antarctic expedition, he had regard not alone for their powers of physical endurance, but also for their recognized dispositions, for the rigors of that enterprise must test temperaments as well as

physiques. There is little use also in demanding uniformity of progress and of results in those whom we teach.

5. **Distribution of General Intelligence Within the Group.** All of these elements of the biological inheritance vary greatly within the social group, though the limits be thus fixed for the individual. But strangely enough the distribution of any single element throughout the group is also relatively fixed. The distribution of general intelligence may be seen in the following table. It shows a few geniuses at one end, a few imbeciles at the other, and the great mass of common folk in between.

DISTRIBUTION OF GENERAL INTELLIGENCE

GRADE	D—	D	C—	C	C+	B	A
Proportion	10%	15%	20%	25%	16½%	9%	4½%
Mental Age	8-9	10-11	12	13-14	15-16	17-18	19

(NOTE. *Mental Age* is the term used by psychologists to indicate the normal age at which a given degree of general intelligence should be attained. This may be in advance of the chronological or calendar age, or may lag behind it. So adults of Class D, who represent 15 per cent. of the population, have minds as bright as normal children of 10-11 years of age. A low grade carries also low responsibility, and hence individual happiness. A high grade means high responsibility necessary for the good of society.

Those below C are unable to live by general principles, such as "It is wrong to tell a lie." Here are also most of the criminals. C—, C, and C+ are average folk; B are bright, while A represents the few geniuses.)

6. Acquired Characteristics. In this connection it should also be noted that for the most part acquired characteristics are not passed on from generation to generation. The controversy is on at present as to whether or not we should say they are *never* passed on. It is safe to say, however, that generally speaking the virtuoso's child must practise scales, if he would play like his father. The linguist's son may inherit great linguistic capacity, but he must acquire his vocabulary just as his father did. Joe Wright inherited from his father the stout heart, the iron frame, and the temperament to make of him a great potential oarsman, but it took also that same father's careful training of his son in technique and form to make of him one of the world's great rowers. Again, there have been several generations of the weavers of the famous Gobelin tapestries within the same families only because sons, who inherited their fathers' capacities, received later from those same skilled fathers special training in their wonderful art. And the prophet's son, with capacity for knowing God, may just as possibly turn out an atheist.

In former generations it was a common thing to spur young people to endeavor by saying: "What this one has done you can do. There is plenty of room at the top." What has thus far

been said, on the other hand, concerning our limitations, physical, mental, and spiritual, would seem to put a damper on our effort and to lead to pessimism, were it not for the considerations that follow.

II. HUMAN NATURE'S GREAT CAPACITY FOR CHANGE

Human nature has great capacity for change, within the limits already suggested. And here man stands in marked contrast to the lower animals, most of whose actions are determined by rather closely defined instincts. Man has, in other words, a wide range of possible adjustment to his physical and social environment. He varies the type of his dwelling-place to suit the climate and his economic circumstances; he adapts his occupation to his environment, fishing, farming, mining, or whatever nature makes most profitable; if he moves to a new land, as our own immigrants have done, he takes up new language, new political life, new traditions; he may change completely his religious life. Moreover, while, as we shall see later, custom and social inheritance exercise a potent influence in our lives, we need not be hopelessly chained by them. We may resist them and shape our own destinies, if we will sufficiently exert our intelligence and our wills. Knowing this, advertisers coax us to change our habits of food, automobiles, toothpaste, and cigarettes. Political spellbinders seek to change our political outlook and practise. Preachers try

to alter our ways of life. And they all know that, while many will be unmoved by their appeals, enough will yield to make their propaganda profitable.

So in the new-born babe there are a thousand men. He is at first just a bundle of tendencies to act and react, and it is not yet determined whether he shall be saint or sinner, farmer or artist, prize-fighter or missionary. As one of H. G. Wells' characters puts it, "I'm not a man, but a mob."

There are three methods of handling these native tendencies, to determine the direction and degree of their development:

1. Cultivation of Socially Desirable Tendencies. This principle should be obvious. It is the basis of most of our educational enterprise. It assumes that many of our native impulses most normally and readily tend to express themselves in behavior that is wholesome for the individual and advantageous to society. The method of such cultivation, however, is not always clear. Most children, for example, exhibit some tendency to helpfulness. Shall this atrophy through neglect? Or shall it become a powerful and desirable force through deliberate use? Many so-styled "unselfish" mothers have actually spoiled their children by taking the easier and essentially selfish course of doing things themselves, rather than take the harder course of cultivating the child's desire to help. For it costs in time and patience, in sympathetic thought, and often in broken dishes. Again,

most young people exhibit some degree of interest in things of the spirit, however slight. Shall this be captured and cultivated to its possible limit, or shall it be allowed to die of neglect? Your hardened old sinner is almost hopeless just because his early religious capacities were starved to death, while his evil tendencies grew without restraint, were actually cultivated.

The challenge to religious education is to reverse this process, to starve out the evil tendency for want of occasion, and to cultivate the good. This was largely Luther Burbank's method of plant cultivation. And so impressed was he with this law of life that he believed he could take the child of notoriously criminal parents and by careful nurture make of him a useful and law-abiding citizen. Not all are agreed that our opportunity is so untrammeled by heredity, yet none can deny that the method presents great possibilities, particularly when it is made the channel for the powerful religious dynamic. It is, indeed, the method that is transforming the criminal tribes of South India into law-abiding, industrious, Christian people.

2. Sublimation. Many of our native impulses, however, may be satisfied by any one of several possible activities. Some of these will be desirable from a character-forming standpoint, but too often the line of least resistance leads to harmful and evil expression. Sublimation consists of changing the direction in which an impulse shall find its outlet, from the more probable to the less obvious activity. Take, for

example, the fighting impulse so prevalent among young boys. Entirely to suppress it may make a craven and a weakling, may develop an inferiority complex. To let it take its course may produce a bully, who will be an unsocial, if not actually an anti-social, adult. But to redirect all of its energy may produce the chivalrous defender of the weak and the noble champion of the right. Theodore Roosevelt never had his fighting impulse wholly crushed out, nor did the apostle Paul, but each had it well in hand for a worthy combat. The sex impulse may be diverted from its primitive expression into courtesy, poetry, art, and other channels. For example a sublimated form of sex is the young people's interest in personal appearance. It is the woman's part in sex relationship to be courted. To this end there must be nothing displeasing about her, but rather, if possible, she must be positively attractive. Now a bad skin is unattractive, so girls with sallow, anemic, or coarse complexions reduce them all to a common denominator with lip-stick and rouge. Millions of dollars are spent annually, not to make adolescent girls conspicuously attractive, but to save them from being notably unattractive. On the other hand, the expensive silk stockings, the insistence on the newest style, the garments really beyond the girl's means, are all to render her positively attractive. This is sex sublimated. Further the man who courts must at times be roughly masculine and again be himself attractive. So college boys pass back and forth from negligence to punctilious care.

Again to illustrate, that curiosity tendency which we find so marked in the early years of adolescence, left uncontrolled and active, produces the busybody, who is a social nuisance and trouble-maker. The same tendency sublimated is the driving urge that makes the student, the inventor, the scientist, and the pioneer. It has been a factor in man's search after God. Here, then, in sublimation are great character possibilities, releasing human energies for the promotion of worthy ends and diverting them from harmful expression.

3. **Inhibition.** The third method of dealing with our native human tendencies is by inhibition, that is wholly damming up the impulse so that it may not come to active expression. Then if the control be sufficiently strong, the tendency will follow the way of all life, it will die from disuse, it will atrophy. This will be a happy outcome or otherwise according as the tendency is socially harmful or not. Check, for example, the possible youthful impulse to poetic expression; never write a line of verse; avoid picturesque language; and the poetic capacity will be lost. Refrain from the impulse to be charitable; never give a cent to relieve human suffering; crush the emotion of pity; stop the ears to stories of misery; and the social capacity for sympathy will disappear. Follow wholly Paul's description of Christian love, as found in his famous thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians, and soon the tendency to jealousy will vanish.

All living together demands some inhibition,

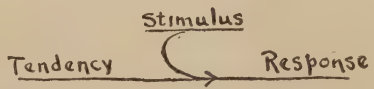
for without restraint of their more self-centered impulses, men could not possibly have social relations. The Ten Commandments, with their insistent "Thou shalt not," represent an early attempt at social control through inhibition. In form they are prohibitions, restraint from without by law, and each seeks to correct by compulsion some existing practise that is contrary to the good of society. It is difficult to live with people who lie and steal, kill and commit adultery. To be of character-forming value, however, they must become real inhibitions, voluntary self-control. The Eighteenth Amendment to our Constitution is rightly called "prohibition," and even now it is producing desirable results. To be of most worth, however, it must become inhibition, it must pass into the voluntary habit life of the people. And this will take time. We restrain little children by prohibition, but we expect adolescents to begin to practise inhibition.

It should be noted here that in the cultivation of our native tendencies it is relatively rare that any one ever attains the limits of his own capacities. There usually remains sufficient room for progress, even within our limitations, to call for better and ever better effort.

III. HOW HUMAN NATURE DEVELOPS

1. Native Tendency or Impulse Given Direction by Stimulus. From among the various objects around him, the year-old baby reaches for the

bright red ball. He is born with a tendency to grasp things; the sensation of the brilliant color is the dominant stimulus; it gets the center of his attention because it makes the most marked demand; so he ignores the duller colored toys and seizes the ball. This case is simple, but for an older person the stimulus may be more subtle, more complex. It may come to the brain through the sensory nerves, sight, smell, sound, and so forth. Sound includes, of course, the very wide range of thought stimulus through articulate speech. It may, again, be the exact mental picture of a previous experience, rising in the mind out of memory. Or it may be an idea, a mental picture arising through association with either of these. A simple figure will help to interpret this:



To illustrate further: Simple hunger is an unguided impulse to eat, growing out of the condition of certain nerve-ends in the stomach. While it remains unrecognized, it creates unrest, but causes no activity leading to its satisfaction. But let there be a stimulus, the aroma of a favorite dish, the memory of a good meal, or the idea of eating presented through the hearing of the dinner-bell, a sound that by association has come to suggest food, and forthwith, if the way be clear, there will follow the appropriate action of food-getting. Such is the order: ten-

dency—stimulus—response. Certain actions tend to repeat themselves, the reaction becomes more prompt, accurate, and automatic, and habits are formed. Furthermore, as we react to many stimuli, certain associations are formed out of the responses. So a great variety of social suggestions, of inner desires, and of actual experiences combine to make one man a scholar, another a business man, and another a politician. Thus through the multiplicity of life's activities human nature develops, character is formed.

2. **Development Through Social Interaction.** This development of human nature originates and continues largely through social interaction, person with person. No child is left to develop wholly by the process of trial and error, but rather, consciously or unconsciously, our fellow men furnish the major portion of the original stimuli that incite to action. So the babe's individual trial-and-error method of communication, the more or less accidental use of the organs of speech, which may become temporarily fixed as "baby talk," if others accept it and respond to it, soon gives way to the stimulus of socially established and more effective language. Elders give to the child the words or vocal tools for the accomplishment of recognized results, in one environment French tools or vocabulary, in another German, and in another English.

The hunger impulse, which at first may respond to food or poison alike, soon has a more or less habitual outlet through the stimulus of the food which others have found to be good and

which they present to us. So we eat beef and not horse flesh, largely because social habit so determines. So also each nation has its particular likes and dislikes in food, passed on socially from generation to generation. America encountered difficulty in feeding her war allies because they had never learned to eat cornmeal, which she could produce so cheaply and abundantly. We thus accept the inheritance of social experience. Few of us are originators. So it is with our customs, our skills, our science, our religion. Society out of the common human experiences furnishes many of the stimuli that develop human nature.

When the stimuli are deliberately controlled in order to determine the response, we call this education. If the impulse be wholly undesirable, as in the case of jealousy, we may seek to avoid the stimulus, that the tendency may die. If it be wholly desirable, as in the case of kindness, we may deliberately and frequently repeat the stimulus till the response becomes habitual. If it be of less certain character, capable of good or evil issue, as in the case of curiosity, we may carefully select those stimuli that will produce only the desirable response.

It should be noted here that one's social environment, made up of all the persons on whom one acts and to whom one reacts, must be thought of as including also the supreme Person, even God, and that man's highest development comes through interaction or communion with him. But here, too, we follow social suggestion.

We are Mohammedans or Christians, Catholic or Protestant, Baptist or Lutheran or Episcopalian in the first instance because of the practises customary in our immediate social environment, for the satisfaction of our religious impulses and desires, the prayers, the rituals, and the forms of worship.

3. **Experience Which Incites to Action May Be Personal or Vicarious.** It may be one's own, or it may be the experience of another into which one enters so fully by imagination that it prompts to action. But one's own experience is usually a stronger stimulus than is the vicarious, the strength of the latter depending on the degree of feeling that may accompany it. To illustrate the two types: Her fellow villagers said to the Samaritan woman: "Now we believe, not because of thy speaking: for we have heard for ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Saviour of the world" (John 4: 42). In imagination they had entered into her experience, when she recited it, sufficiently to investigate for themselves. Afterward they acted on a much stronger belief based on their own experience of Jesus. These two types of experience form the basis of all true teaching. The best learning comes through actual participation, while breadth of learning comes through social or racial experience, presented in story or history, or in the more abstract form of precept or maxim. Herein lies the pedagogic value of the Bible, for it is the world's greatest treasury of the religious experience of the race. But to be of real value in the

development of human nature it must pass back again into living experience. So Jesus said, "This *do*," "He that *doeth*," "*Do* likewise."

4. **Which Stimulus Will Determine Action?** Scores of stimuli storm the brain every minute. We cannot possibly respond to all of them. Which will enter into character development? Only in the case of the babe is the matter so purely mechanical as that mere loudness of sound or brightness of color will determine the response. To be sure, the nature of a previous response to the same situation tends to a mechanically repeated response which we call habit. But most ideas that enter the brain must run a whole gamut of determining factors before they can issue in action. Interest settles the kind of reception the idea will receive. A hungry boy may even forget his meal in the pursuit of a newly discovered fact concerning the nesting habits of certain birds, because birds are for the present his great hobby. The sheer joy of a new discovery will send him tramping miles across bleak winter fields, oblivious to his own discomfort, and will later drive him to the town library to push his investigation further. The feeling that accompanies the new idea will thus determine its driving power. It must also be measured by the scale of value which one has built up. Fishing, for example, is an absorbing end in itself to the real "sport," but only a means for relaxation and recuperation to the man of larger purpose. The relation of the new idea to the attainment of those refined and emotionalized

mental pictures, which we call ideals, must be discovered. See, for instance, the fate of the proffered cigarette with the boy who dreams of becoming a winning athlete. The type of one's personality and the strength of one's will to decide and to act also play important parts. All these and other factors may combine so harmoniously for very quick response that they will not seem to have entered into the matter at all. Or they may so conflict as to cause lengthy delay.

5. **The Contribution of Religious Education.** It is the business of religious education to create situations in which wholesome experience may be easily had, to furnish a wealth of right ideas out of which sound scales of value and worthy ideals may be developed, to build up such controls in the life that one may be counted upon to act with promptness and decision, to control the habit-forming tendency so that only desirable ones may survive, to cultivate Christlike attitudes, and thus to produce a character that becomes in its own way increasingly in keeping with the most worthy in the social and religious environment. It should never be content, but seek ever to incite to a life above the level of the common social inheritance. "Except your righteousness *exceed!*"

IV. THE SPECIFIC RELATION TO ADOLESCENCE

It is the purpose of this study to show how the foregoing discussion is related to adolescence. At this point it will be sufficient to draw atten-

tion in advance to three great principles in the training of adolescents:

1. Adolescence being a period of great activity and experimentation, with a zest for new experience, training must be much through *doing*.

2. Adolescence being a period of the awakening of new powers, sensations, and emotions, and of the heightening and refining of older ones, these must be rightly interpreted and evaluated, and must be guided into right attitudes and high ideals.

3. Adolescence being a period of marked intellectual growth, the best materials for thought must be furnished. The rapidly developing power of reason must have true information to work upon, concerning, for example, such important matters as the Bible, the church, the home, money, industrial and racial relations, sex.

For Discussion and Observation

1. Granting that intelligence tests can do what they are designed to do, what are some of the practical uses to which they might be put, particularly in religious education?

2. Cite cases of students you have known who were apparently hopelessly dull in certain studies and brilliant in others. How do you account for this? Could better application and study have produced a better balance?

3. In what sense is it true that "all men are born equal"? In what sense untrue?

4. Why is a caste system that demands that a son take up the occupation of his father psy-

chologically unsound? Cite cases in which, on the other hand, a son has successfully followed his father's occupation. How do you account for this?

5. Cite from your own experience or from observation instances in which inhibition, sublimation, and the development of desirable traits have produced worthy character. Cases also of the opposite result. What might be done with a child's fears?

6. In view of point III, what might be expected to be the result, if a native African child should be adopted at birth into an intelligent American missionary's family? Why?

7. Cite, if possible, instances in which "vicarious experience" (point III, 3), acquired at the movies, has incited to action of any sort, desirable or otherwise.

8. What may Boy Scouts, Girl Reserves, and similar organizations contribute to the formation of adolescent character?

Bibliography

Allport, F. N.: "Social Psychology." Houghton Mifflin, 1924.

Overstreet, H. A.: "Influencing Human Behavior." Norton, 1925.

Dewey, J.: "Human Nature and Conduct." Holt, 1922.

Barclay, W. C.: "The Pupil." Methodist Book Concern, 1925.

Robinson, J. H.: "The Mind in the Making." Harper, 1921.

Hartshorne, H.: "Childhood and Character." Pilgrim, 1919.

CHAPTER II

THE MEANING AND DIVISIONS OF ADOLESCENCE

Our study of adolescence must inevitably be limited to average and normal persons. In practise, however, it will be well to remember that we shall constantly meet exceptions, in those above-average and below-average persons, to whom our findings will not apply. In fact, paradoxical as it may appear, the strictly *average* person does not exist, except in theory, for all of us vary in some particulars and in some degree from such a standard. This must be borne in mind when the limitations of space in this book compel a brevity of statement that may appear too dogmatic. All of us know young people who do not do all the things that adolescent persons are expected to do.

I. ONE OF LIFE'S MAJOR CRISES

1. Relation to Other Crisis Experiences. While life is a continuous process, its course is by no means even. Events and experiences stand out with greater or less prominence as crises, new situations for which no habits make adequate provision and which must be faced and worked through before life can resume its habitual way. They include such trivial things as a broken

shoe-string, such temporary things as a broken arm, or such permanent things as broken health. Some of these crises are individual and occasional, such as sickness, adversity, prosperity, and opportunity, while others belong to the normal development of all life. Of these latter, birth, adolescence, young manhood or womanhood, parenthood, middle age, old age, death are life's major crises, being more or less sudden in their manifestation. Our present interest is in the second of these experiences.

2. **The Time Limits of Adolescence.** Adolescence, then, is a period of rapid development in practically every phase of life, physical, mental, social, and spiritual, both preceded and followed by periods of more general change. It comes out of childhood and emerges into adulthood. Most of the differences between the little, irresponsible, play-loving, self-centered, dependent boy and his father, mature of mind and body, intelligent, capable of assuming responsibility for self and for others, are to be accounted for by the changes that take place in the second dozen years of life. The experience is unmistakable, though its exact age limits may not be set.

Variations in these limits may be due to sex, for we expect girls usually to develop as much as from one to two years before their brothers, shooting ahead physically, mentally, and socially. Later the boys will catch up and in many respects pass the girls. Again, climate seems to be a determining factor, for youths of tropical lands usually mature earlier by many months than

those of colder countries. Romance, marriage, and parenthood come sooner; but also comes earlier decline from the peak of physical power and charm, and old age arrives by earlier schedule. Just how climate has this effect, or what elements of climate are more potent is not clearly known. Further, there are unaccounted variations in the time required for the development of individuals whose circumstances seem almost the same. Even "identical" twins may not follow the same schedule, an instance, for example, having been observed in which one girl required three years for growth in height equal to that accomplished by her twin sister in twelve months. These variations complicate more or less the matter of grading in our educational procedure, throwing nicely articulated programs out of gear. Normally, however, we may think of the period as lying between the ages of twelve and twenty-four, the change being rapid at first and gradually growing less.

3. Signs of the Adolescent Change. Most apparent among the changes that belong to this time are the physical. At the beginning and giving it the name of "puberty" is the appearance of hair on the face and other parts of the body. This is also the time of manifestly rapid growth in physical bulk. The only other such period is early childhood, when the rate of growth is even more rapid. The voice undergoes a marked change; the figure takes on the characteristic contours and proportions of approaching maturity; the powers and organs of repro-

duction develop rapidly; the brain increases somewhat in size, but even more in complexity, making possible the full range of intellectual power; and even the most casual observer knows that the crisis is on. Then when the physical powers have reached their height, the period is over, though the end is not nearly so discernible as the beginning, but passes imperceptibly into adulthood. At its close the man is as nearly complete physically as he will ever be. In fact, while he may seem to rest for a time on this pinnacle, it is only by resisting the inevitable forces of physical decline that at once begin their work. So the press, interested only in his physical condition and his ability to contend with a man nearer the peak age, speaks of a pugilist of thirty-two years as "an old man." Most of the record-breakers and winners of honors in the recent Olympic games were young men, late in adolescence or just out of it. Base-ball players, on the other hand, with whom skill is an important factor of play, even more than strength, by keeping in good physical condition may continue to advance their prowess for another decade after adolescence. Golf, which is primarily a game of skill rather than of physical strength, is suitable for much older men.

Other changes, less manifest, but of equal importance and significance, accompany the physical within the same period and are inseparable from it. These are the mental, social, and spiritual maturing processes. The whole might be well encompassed by paraphrasing Paul's words to

read, "When I was passing through adolescence and becoming a man, I gradually put away childish things."

II. MENTAL ASPECT OF ADOLESCENCE

This rapidly growing adolescent lives a life of the mind as well as of the body. And these are vitally related, though when we call him a "psycho-physical organism," a living, active, feeling, and willing unity, made up of a material and mechanical body together with a living spirit, God alone knows the full meaning of the connecting hyphen. They are born together, and so far as may be seen, they die together. The relation is so intimate, indeed, that it is not surprising to find that the physical growth we have just considered is accompanied by a marked acceleration in mental development. Again it is only in childhood that we find a total development of more rapid rate.

1. General Characteristics of the Period. Educators, recognizing the change of mental life of adolescence at each stage, have provided the high school with its own interests, its own materials, and its own type of instruction, and the college, whose whole curriculum and organization assume still more responsibility and initiative on the part of the student. More recently, however, it has been seen that from the very beginning adolescence differs from childhood that precedes it, and we are having the junior high schools for the later grade children and the early high school

pupils, early adolescents who form a logical educational group. The reason is not far to find, for changing interests, developing capacities, expanding desires and aims, new social experience and understanding demand these new modes of educational procedure.

With the adolescent increase in the convolutions of the surface of the brain comes also increasing capacity for reasoning, for grasping the relation of things. Alice, who stubbornly rebels against the social control to which formerly she has submitted, may nevertheless willingly cooperate when she fully understands the situation. She would bitterly resent a threat of punishment for failure to brush her teeth, but will faithfully perform this rite when she sees how it is related to health and beauty. Albert, who as a preadolescent child accepted the world and life as he seemed to find them, now may startle us by demanding to know "Why?" but no longer as a child whose query may be satisfied with almost any plausible answer. Instead there may be dawning in him that curiosity that is the basis of all scientific inquiry, the desire to go to the foundation of things. As an early adolescent, Tom had made a steam-engine that would really go, Henry had charted the nesting-places of the local birds to discover why each variety selected its particular habitat, while Arthur persistently made intelligent and valiant attempts to solve the problem of perpetual motion. In early adolescence the power of reasoning is beginning to mature.

2. **Development Is Socially Conditioned.** But right here, lest we look for uniformity of this power in persons of the same chronological age, we need to remind ourselves of the rather wide variation we are sure to find, owing in part to the differences of native mental capacity, which we have already noted elsewhere, and in part to the amount of socially stimulated experience each individual may have had. The youth who has grown up in a wide-awake city, where ideas are afloat, experience is rich and varied, and opportunities many, should outdo the Eskimo lad of the same age in general reasoning, though the latter will hold his own within the field of Eskimo interests and experience.

3. **Other Characteristics.** Mere impulsiveness, the tendency to respond to stimulus quickly and with little thought, should now increasingly give place to volitionally controlled response. Obedience to others, which seemed a virtue in the little child, is likely to yield gradually to self-direction, often to the confusion and dismay of the parent who has forgotten his own youth. But whether this shall be for good or for ill depends on the type of training that has been given and the socially approved ideals that have been set up. The greatly increased emotional feeling, which, as we shall see, also marks the mental life of these young people, may in the early stage render this self-control unsteady, till feelings, too, have been mastered and disciplined.

4. **The Youth Attains Selfhood.** Yet in all this process the adolescent is attaining real selfhood.

Personality is coming into its own. The change is highly desirable. But here is to be seen one of the major tasks of religious education, namely, so to train the child that as an adolescent he may safely assume more and more responsibility for his own conduct. This is vital, for here is being determined, in all probability, the whole direction of his life. The principle may be seen in the case of two boys who would drive the family car. Frank, who is four, is taken between his father's knees at the steering-wheel. His chubby hands on the wheel seem to guide the car, and he is happy as a king. But underneath are his father's hands, controlling the car with undiminished vigilance. But Edgar, who is twelve, himself sits at the wheel in full control. Father sits close beside him, directing all his moves and ready to seize the wheel in an emergency. But how that father must discipline himself to leave the lad more and more in control! How hard to leave the speed to his wish, to trust the emergencies to his ability! But only so will he master the car. The boy's own life is worth more than any car, but the process is the same. In the matter of control, the father must be willing to say, "He must increase, but I must decrease."

Again, the old instruction that sought to indoctrinate James and Elizabeth, that grounded them in correct moral and religious doctrine which they must accept, that frowned on innovation and killed originality, did violence to the essential nature of their adolescence, which cries out for self-expression and mastery. On the other hand,

the type of training that continued to surround them with a protecting wall of ignorance and isolation and which tried still to hold the guiding reins, was mistaken. The newer "freedom of youth," which may be so disastrous where these two are ill-prepared, may also be a great boon, if they know how to use it. It may and should produce finer men and women. Religious education must not only help parents in this great task of training their children, but must also prepare them, when they have done their work, gradually and wisely to relinquish their hold.

And because the adolescent is thus taking over more and more the guidance of his own life, he is confronted with the necessity of arriving at those major decisions that will determine largely the direction his life is to take. This necessity, together with the mental ability to reach these decisions, is a characteristic aspect of adolescence. The degree of that ability and the manner in which it is put to work are not here under consideration.

III. THE SOCIAL ASPECTS OF ADOLESCENCE

1. **Expanding Social Horizons.** One has only to contrast a youngster in junior high school with his sophisticated college brother to realize that adolescence is the time in which the youth becomes adjusted to his environment. Forces both within and without are at work to this end. First from without there is the influence of wider

environment and of more complex social relations. Home lifts its restraining hand and the radius is extended. Henry now goes farther to reach his high school; and later he may leave home entirely for college or to go to work. And before the end of adolescence he will probably be ready to take entire care of himself anywhere. He meets and forms contacts with more persons and more kinds of person, which makes for breadth of social horizon. But even if the radius be short, the number and variety of social relations greatly increases. School, church, work, and recreation may have several groupings within each one. These things are true even of the most limited life, and emphatically so in much of our present American civilization. Then from within there are not only the increased ability to understand and appreciate the new social relations and a heightened emotional life to respond to them, but perhaps most important of all, as we shall see, the awakening sex life becomes a powerful dynamic, prompting to new social interests, more significant interpretations, more adequate evaluations, and more controlling ideals. Not till adolescence does it become possible for one to become truly a socialized being.

2. **Both Less and More of An Individual.** The paradoxical adolescent tends to become at the same time both less and more of an individual. On the one hand he tends to merge himself in his social group as never before. Two girls were sitting quietly studying, when suddenly the college bell broke the silence with a clamorous

ring. Instantly both girls jumped to their feet and with sparkling eyes and excited laugh danced about, shouting: "We've won! We've won!" Far away in another town the college football-team had scored a victory, and these studious young women at home said, "We" have won. They and the team and the rest of their fellow students, whether actively participating or not, were one body, saying, "We won." Just so the adolescent begins to lose himself in his group, fraternity, school, club, or gang, at work or at play. Not so the little child who thinks rarely of the group, but normally of himself. Mrs. Wilkins is distressed over the selfishness of Bobby, aged four. "He always wants the best toy and will not share with his little playmates!" Quite so. Bobby is engaged in self-discovery, and his fond mother is demanding of him what can hardly become normal before adolescence, namely, self-forgetfulness for the sake of the group. But youth may learn this. There is more than a hint in this for the church. Can she teach her young people so to identify themselves that they will say enthusiastically, "My church, my church school, my young people's society"?

And yet, on the other hand, the young person, conscious in a new sense of his selfhood, and quite unconscious as yet of the limits of his own powers, may grow restless or even rebellious with the desire for independence. He may resent any control, rarely discriminating between that socially desirable control which must become self-control, and that which is less useful and abiding.

He chafes under restraint. How often he tries to throw over the education father is paying for, in order to get a job that will give him economic independence. He leaves Sunday school not so much because he has intelligently weighed it and found it wanting, but because hitherto he has gone under compulsion, but now means to assert his manly independence. If he thinks at all, he is likely to argue against customary modes of thought just to feel his intellectual freedom, or to join a radical group in order to express his political or social liberty. He is apt to poke fun at the conformist and to hold him in contempt.

3. **Adolescent Religion as Social Experience.** Partly as a phase of the new social life, and partly from other adolescent causes, there may well develop a real and independent religious life also. That the social horizon should so extend as to include the great Person, God, is preeminently an adolescent experience. For the attitudes, the appreciations, the relationships, and the responses which we look upon as distinctly religious, but which are also essentially social, now become both possible and normal. We note all this here in anticipation of fuller discussion later on.

IV. THE DIVISIONS OF ADOLESCENCE

Adolescence, itself a division of life, is commonly thought of as falling into three subdivisions. And, indeed, the characteristics of these shorter periods are such as to make them rather distinctive. Space will permit little more

than the cataloging of some of the more evident traits of each period. The key-words given are merely suggestive of trends of these periods, trends which overlap, yet are sufficiently marked as to be considered characteristic.

1. **Early Adolescence.** Ages 12 to 14. (These, as in the following periods also, are but approximate ages. A sharp division must not be insisted upon.) This is the junior high school age in public education, and the intermediate age in the church school.

Keyword: EXPANSION. Physical, intellectual, emotional, and social powers all develop with bewildering rapidity. Accompanying experience and the circle of interests, which help to make the new life intelligible, often come more slowly, so that we may still have a big boy or girl, thinking in almost childish fashion of "Me," "My chum," "My group," "My affairs," with great emphasis on the personal pronoun. The new and old operate side by side in the same person in a most chaotic and baffling way. The breaking voice is but a physical manifestation of what is taking place through the youth's whole being as the difficult task of readjustment goes on. Harry, who has been the joy of the home, suddenly becomes hard to understand, even for his parents. Now he is keen and alert like his old self, and now he is dull and lazy. One moment he seems interested and enthusiastic, and the next he may be indifferent to the very same thing. He may plunge eagerly into the reading of a new book, only to drop it and never finish it.

He experiments with many things, but carries few of them to the point of useful mastery, unless under some compulsion. His nerves are like a rapidly expanding telephone system that cannot function smoothly. Baffled or even frightened by the new experience, he may become painfully reticent, thinking that it is all unique; no one ever passed this way before; no one can quite understand; and they may laugh if he speaks of it. Emotions old or seemingly new are playing fast and loose with him to his complete confusion. Those who would be helpful to this period must possess infinite patience and sympathetic understanding. And when a church finds such persons, they should not be allowed to waste their peculiar gifts on individuals or groups of other less needy ages, on tasks that others may do just as well.

2. **Middle Adolescence.** Ages 15 to 17. The senior high school age. In the church, the senior age.

Keyword: REORGANIZATION. This and the succeeding periods, on other than their physical side, are largely the products of our civilization at work through the public school and other social agencies with the newly acquired powers of the preceding period. The adolescent begins, haltingly it may often be, to be acquainted with his new self. We often find him physically active, eager to feel out his new strength and ignorant of its limitations. Frank will want to tackle a man's load on the portage on the summer canoe trip, and Mildred will dance till daylight and

never admit that she is tired, if they are left to their own discretion. There is usually some return to physical control and consequent skill. Jack plays better baseball, while his sister improves her tennis. There will also be found intellectual activity, in keeping, of course, with native ability, but often amounting to real eagerness. This will probably reveal itself more in the form of curiosity and wide ranging exploration than in intensiveness and thoroughness of mental effort. And as the youth explores in many fields and reacts to one phase of life after another, he is all the time discovering himself in the intensity of his shifting interests, and may change frequently his purpose as to his life-work. There is a great danger also that his capacity for intellectual activity may be utterly dissipated on the trivial and sentimental, or even obscene, offerings of our newsstands. The danger is greater because of the emotional instability of this period. The emotions of middle adolescence may be enjoyed for their own novelty and intensity, without adequate direction as to their object, as in the case of " puppy love." It is possible that one may even get enjoyment out of indulging in self-pity or other emotions.

3. **Later Adolescence.** Ages 18 to 24. The college age in education. The young people's age in the church.

Keyword: REALIZATION. Because life is here beginning to get its " set," this period is not always recognized in popular thought as belonging to adolescence. The height of all the powers

is now being attained. As evidence of this we might examine the ages of holders of championship records in athletics, or we might turn to the surprising record of human achievement that belongs to this period, in invention, in science, in poetry, and in art. The horizon of interests may be greatly extended, if the social environment has furnished the stimulus and opportunity. So we see college students eager to solve the world's most perplexing problems, when often they cannot handle the lesser ones of their own campus. This is evidence also of a characteristic sense of social responsibility and idealism. To be sure we must remember the larger number who attain physical maturity at this time, but who never reach their mental and spiritual majority. Yet because the idealism of this age is often nonconformist, the church, which tends to be conservative, frequently seems unable to harness the dynamics of later adolescence for the great tasks of the Kingdom of God. It should also be noted that where social and economic conditions do not interfere, this period often includes embarkation upon the great social adventure of marriage.

For Discussion and Observation

1. Call to mind several boys and girls of your acquaintance just entering adolescence, and observe in them the points noted concerning the time of beginning and the more evident physical signs. Compare boys with girls, Latin peoples with Scandinavians, etc.

2. Compare the methods of instruction in elementary school, junior high school, senior high school, and college. Does your church school make any corresponding changes in method of instruction? Should it? Can it?

3. Cite specific remarks of early adolescents that illustrate increasing capacity for reasoning; in particular cite remarks concerning things religious.

4. How may we in part explain the rise of so-called atheistic societies among college young people?

5. Do you know of a case in which a domineering father has continued to treat his boys or girls as if they were still young children, when actually they have gone far into adolescence? What has been the result on the character of these young people?

6. With a particular and typical high school boy (or girl) in mind, list the various social groups to which he belongs, beginning with the home. How far do these conflict with the church? How far do they cooperate?

7. Name some of the ways in which the church or any of its agencies may capitalize youth's social "desire to belong" so as to develop strong Christian loyalties.

8. Call to mind three boys or girls, 13, 16, and 19 years of age. Comparing them, do the suggested divisions of adolescence seem legitimate? Do the key-words seem well chosen and suggestive?

Bibliography

Mudge, E. L.: "Psychology of Early Adolescence." Methodist Book Concern, 1922.

——, "Psychology of Later Adolescence." Methodist Book Concern, 1926.

Moxcey, M. E.: "Psychology of Middle Adolescence." Methodist Book Concern, 1925.

Tyler, J. M.: "Growth and Education." Houghton Mifflin, 1907.

Tracy, F.: "Psychology of Adolescence." Macmillan, 1922.

CHAPTER III

THE ANTECEDENTS OF ADOLESCENCE

No one ever fell asleep a child and awoke an adolescent. Life is too continuous a process, and even though the current may flow more swiftly at times, it is the same life. Adolescence is a crisis, in the sense that it is a period of rapid change, but it makes no violent and complete break with the past. Instead every aspect of the new life has had its antecedents in the old, so that we can adequately know what the adolescent is only by knowing something of what he was as a child. By the time puberty has arrived, however, there is already evident a wide range of variety, not alone in original capacity of the individuals, but also in their development up to this time.

I. THE BIOLOGICAL INHERITANCE

The adolescent is what he is first of all because of the life given him through the coming together of the two lines of his parentage. These two lines, however, are highly complex, since the child has also four grandparents, eight great-grandparents, and so on, till, theoretically at least, there are over a million ancestors in the twentieth generation back. Actually, however, in any group there is so much crossing and re-crossing of lines that the number of separate

lines of ancestry is greatly reduced. This means that the child shares a great common racial heritage of his group, as well as those individual special traits that come filtering down through his more immediate ancestors.

1. **Racial Inheritance.** Certain outstanding racial characteristics are very evident, the color of the skin or hair, facial features, and others. Thus the Negro, the Oriental, the Scandinavian, the Latin, and the Jewish physical types are easily distinguishable. There are also temperamental traits that characterize different peoples, so that we have the stoic Indian, the emotional Negro, the vivacious Frenchman, and the docile Chinese. These racial traits are reasonably sure to come to the individual, if the stock be unmixed. So eminent a scholar as Dr. Franz Boas tells us, however, that there is no essential difference of original mental capacity between the races. The seeming differences are differences of development rather than of capacity, and are due to the varying degree of opportunity for social contacts which the races have had in the long past. Those races which have been isolated have remained undeveloped, while those that have lived where the social currents crossed have gone far in culture and progress. No race, however, is doomed to perpetual inferiority. Instead opportunity for wider contacts will develop latent possibilities. Not all agree to this. In our American melting-pot, however, the racial factor soon ceases to be a dominant one, for most of us represent the mingling of many nations, and the

worker in the church school will find that diversity of racial background characterizes the class group more often than similarity.

2. **Individual Inheritance.** These adolescents may have been born "free and equal" in the eyes of the law, but were born anything but equal in nearly every other respect. Intellectual capacities, special traits and abilities, factors of disposition, range and strength of emotions appear in all sorts of combination and degree. Nature knows nothing of the standardization of our modern industry. She never produces two alike. And as yet science, with all the wonderful things that it knows about heredity, cannot foretell just what any individual will be, since even those of identical parentage may inherit ancestral traits of mind and body in widely varying combination. Even the most casual observation will show this. At best we can predict only the probable frequency of the appearance of particular traits within the family. This variation, however, is most desirable, since it makes for individuality and spares us from deadly monotony. But it means also that the worker with young people to be truly successful must be prepared to modify the approach to each life as it comes. No cut-and-dried uniform methods will suffice.

3. **General Intelligence.** Most important among the points of variation is probably the matter of general intelligence. No child brings with him at birth any fund of actual information, however much his parents may have been trained.

Each one, on the other hand, does bring some degree of capacity for grasping, evaluating, retaining, and using information as it comes to us. Educational psychologists have determined with a fair degree of accuracy the amount of available general information that may be normally anticipated for each age of childhood, and have devised tests to show how near the normal a person may be in the matter of general intelligence. One's "mental age" is then said to be that at which his particular degree of general intelligence is to be looked for, whether this be ahead of or behind his chronological age. And this ratio of mental age to chronological age is a constant factor. That is to say, general intelligence is fixed by inheritance for each individual. What use will be made of this native gift is a matter of education, which of course means also religious education.

4. **Instincts.** There is some difference of opinion just now as to whether the biological inheritance includes also inborn habits, acquired through the long experience of the race, which we have called instincts. The animals undoubtedly inherit such clear-cut instincts, as for example the nest-building instinct that makes each bird build its own characteristic nest, quite untaught. Man probably inherits not instincts in this restricted sense, but instinctive tendencies, "native reaction-tendencies," with less clear patterns of action, a home-making tendency, for example, that may be satisfied with either a hovel or a palace, a cottage or a brown-stone

front. A pugnacious tendency may find expression in biting, kicking, scratching, slapping, or punching, or in fighting with clubs, stones, swords, pistols, or cannons. No racial habit determines the exact behavior that will issue from a given tendency, though undoubtedly many tendencies are common to all normal persons and furnish most of the driving force of life. Some of these tendencies appear in the first years; others are delayed, and are coming to light only in the years just before and just after puberty. This book is in part an attempt to set forth those tendencies that belong to adolescence.

II. THE SOCIAL INHERITANCE

1. **Richness of the Heritage.** This represents all the slowly accumulated experience of the race. Sometimes by mere chance, sometimes by trial and error, sometimes by direct search, man has through the centuries slowly adapted himself to his physical and social environment. No individual could for himself travel that painful road; no child needs to. Each one falls heir to all that the race has learned, though none ever enter into the whole of that inheritance and many come to possess only a small part of it. But certain it is that the average American adolescent has had opportunity, even in childhood, to share largely in that possession, according to his years and his native ability. If we try to imagine a child, isolated from birth from social intercourse with his fellows, and contrast him with just an average

American boy, we may see something of the vital importance of this heritage for development, for character.

2. **Some Particular Elements of the Heritage.** Let us note some of the items of that inheritance:

(1) *Custom.* Every child comes into a large body of customs that belong to the group into which he is born, those things that seem to be done just because they are done. Their origin may be lost; their first meaning may have disappeared; they may now be socially desirable or otherwise. Custom surrounds the child's arrival, and will at last usher him out. It dictates his clothes, much of his food, his etiquette, his business habits. Why should a man lift his hat to a lady, or drive his car on the right side of the road, or put candles on an evergreen tree at Christmas time? Custom directs him to do so. Much of our morality is of this unquestioning, customary sort. The keeping of slaves, for example, and the use of alcoholic beverages used to be taken for granted, even by the most moral people. Our present wage system and our competition in business are generally assumed. Are they for this reason right? Some of our religious practises also are dictated by custom. So men remove their hats in a place of worship, while women retain theirs. Who first did this? And why do we do it?

Customs are largely "caught" and not taught, and even though often quite irrational, they exercise a tyrannical hold, just because "every-

body's doin' it." It takes courage to defy them or deny them. Yet that is just what must be done in some cases. George finds that high school custom demands that he show his loyalty by betting on the school football-team. Jean finds that college custom expects that she will confine her friendships to her own sorority and to the men of certain fraternities. What shall they do? Conform or defy? The boy or girl enters adolescence well equipped with these customs and keenly sensitive to their demands. But before religious education is through with them, it should have taught them how to rationalize and evaluate any custom, and then candidly to accept it as being good, or boldly to break with it as useless or harmful. This is a task for adolescent years.

(2) *Tradition.* This may be thought of as the customary mode of interpreting and evaluating men, institutions, or events, whether of the past or of the present, and as such is a common possession of the group. It usually bears some relation to the facts in the case, though sometimes quite remotely. But however irrational or unscientific, it commands support of popular opinion. Take, for example, the tradition of Lincoln, the joke-maker. Because he had a keen sense of humor, countless tales are attributed to him, which he never uttered or even heard. Or again note the traditions that all Frenchmen are polite, that all Englishmen are lacking in a sense of humor, and that all Chinamen eat rats and mice. What ground is there for these? Where did they

start? Out of just such materials are many of our attitudes and prejudices formed. And because tradition-making is so common and characteristic a human trait, every religion, indeed every sect, carries along a body of tradition of greater or less worth. Our boys and girls enter adolescence possessed of a goodly store of the group traditions, the common attitudes and prejudices. Many of these are sound judgments, but far more are ill-founded, growing out of ignorance and misunderstanding. Are all Jews grasping and deceitful? Are all Negroes inferior and beastly? Are all Catholics treacherous and unpatriotic? The questions seem too ridiculous to ask, and yet they represent very common traditions. Evidently the religious education of adolescents will call for training that will equip for wise discrimination and the fearless search after the truth. Even in the field of religion itself, they must know how to discern that which is sacred because essential and true, and that which has sprung up as mere tradition.

(3) *Sense of Group Superiority.* From his social surroundings the child unconsciously absorbs this important trait, which seems to belong equally to all races. We look upon the people of a strange land with condescension and pity, or even with repulsion, they are so queer, so foolish, and they in turn look down on us as hopelessly crude! "We" are better than any one else, our food, our customs, our language, our religion—in fact practically everything that is ours. And this trait manifests itself in all our

group relations. Our political party, our fraternity, our church are superior. At its best it engenders loyalty and patriotic endeavor; at its worst bigotry, narrowness, unbrotherliness. A wholesome pride in whatever is of worth in the record of one's own people is to be encouraged, but the common expression of this trait is often decidedly unchristian. It has actually been a hindrance to the spread of missionary Christianity on many foreign fields. As the adolescent leaves childhood, he is likely to manifest this trait in no uncertain fashion. During adolescence, when reason may be appealed to, it needs to be rationalized and refined. Is our superiority real? Or is it an assumption ill-founded? What of worth have others to offer us? Surely tolerance and fair-mindedness should be among the goals of the instruction of young people!

(4) *Language.* No greater gift awaits a child's coming than the means of social intercourse through articulate speech and written word. All other means of social interaction seem secondary. Language may relate the child to all men of like speech, and open for him the minds of the world. It may project him back into other days and other environments and may make him the companion of the great minds of all ages. And this instrument, wrought out by our ancestors through millennia of time, becomes at once the possession of every normal child, and that largely without formal instruction. By the beginning of adolescence he probably has a vocabulary of several thousand words. By its end, if he be normal,

he may be at home in the world of human thought.

(5) *Social Institutions and Law.* Home, family, school, Church, city, State, and other institutions stand ready to serve the child, while law would protect and guide him. These fruits of the labors of others are his at once to possess. But each in turn has a right to expect that as he advances in years, the child will make proper return. Up to twelve years of age, the balance is largely on the side of service to the child. By the end of adolescence the young man or woman should be thoroughly trained to make full return in loyalty, idealism, and service, and religious education shares largely in the responsibility of bringing this to pass, particularly in the years of late adolescence.

III. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF LATE CHILDHOOD

For the purpose of our present study it will be sufficient to note in a general way the special characteristics of later childhood only. And at once it should be said that there is not one of those special characteristics of adolescence that does not exist in reality and in some measure in late childhood also. The foregleams of sex, of reason, of social life, and of religion are not mere freaks, but genuine and normal parts of this period. Indeed it may well be that our widespread public education with its richer experience and broader social contacts will tend to push back

to earlier years the first appearance of these traits.

1. **Physical Characteristics.** The years nine to eleven inclusive constitute one of the periods of slower growth in height. Nature seems to be preparing for the strain of early adolescent growth, storing up needed vitality. The muscles of the body grow thicker and harder. Visit the swimming-hole on a summer afternoon, and the junior boys may be easily separated from their younger brothers by this evidence alone. Normally it is an age of good health, the ills to which childhood is specially subject being left behind, and those that are more apt to be present in the growth period being still in the future. The muscles now also come under better control, so that the boy or girl will display increasing skill, and may begin to find more pleasure imitating their older brothers and sisters in games of skill, such as baseball and tennis. The physical life is abounding, strenuous playing, hard fighting, hearty eating being characteristic, boys going just a bit beyond their sisters in it all. The "problem" class of the church school will probably be made up of boys of this age whose chief fault may be that they have more energy than they can easily suppress and keen wits to devise mischief. The sense of humor is usually strong, but crude, and the youngster may take out his fun in loud guffaws and horseplay, to the intense trial and annoyance of his elders. Adolescence, in contrast, may begin with a degree of listlessness and awkwardness. Of the cells that make

up the living organism, the somatic, or body cells grow in childhood, while the reproductive cells are dormant. When the latter begin to multiply, adolescence has begun.

2. **Mental Characteristics.** If there be divergence between the mental age and the chronological age of a child, it has by this time become more marked, so that the spread in mental age between bright and dull boys and girls of the same chronological age is also more pronounced. This means that we must expect to find considerable range in mental age amongst those who physically and chronologically are becoming adolescents. For educational purposes, however, gradation by mere calendar age becomes less and less adequate, though as yet we still try to keep those of the same age moving along together.

"My girl is the greatest reader," says Mrs. Robinson, "when she gets a book, we can hardly get her to her meals." Good! That is according to schedule for the junior. But let us not forget that this reading is not an end in itself. It may be good, bad, or indifferent as an anticipation of adolescence, according to its contents. For in books we but extend the range of our social environment, and we may be wise or very foolish in the choice of these character-making associates. It may be that the hero that is worshiped in the junior's story-book is not actually immoral; probably he is not. But the child's lack of discernment leads him to admire ardently such impossible creatures as Tom Swift, and so to get a quite distorted view of life. Care is needed

in the selection of books. Your junior boy, on the other hand is likely to get more enjoyment in a copy of *Popular Mechanics* or something similar than in Andersen's *Fairy Tales,* for his imagination, which may be keen, is now far more concrete and practical. He wants to take things apart to see how they are made, a clock, a bicycle, or a battery. He also may want to try his hand at making all sorts of things, though he is apt to be impatient of long preparation and painstaking detail, and so either to work crudely or to quit when difficulties become many. A man will now buy his boy more good tools, or will lock up his own, according to his conception of his job as father.

Also if the lad be loquacious, he may regale us at great length and minute detail with what he has read, for his mind is normally quite retentive at this time. And since his mental powers are enlarging and he can begin to grasp the relationships of things, we may hope for some little success in helping him to self-mastery. And surely he will need it when the period of adolescent bewilderment comes upon him. This is one of the most vital things to be sought by leaders of juniors in anticipation of the days just ahead—strong loyalties, wholesome habits, worthy ideals. Note also how your junior finds enjoyment in collecting things, stamps, butterflies, and other things.

3. **Social and Religious Characteristics.** The intense egoism of childhood now begins to relax. If the boys and girls pass into junior high school,

the step upward challenges to a new social outlook, to a new array of relationships, though at first these may be so new as to elicit little response. The child may not understand why he should spend his money to buy a season football ticket "to support the team," when it is far more exciting to "sneak in," if he goes at all. If he likes football itself, the situation is, of course, different. Gradually, however, the boy begins to recognize the rights of others and to subordinate his own wishes to the desires and welfare of his crowd. This does not mean that there is developing any high social idealism, but rather that those with common interests and understandings begin to recognize each other and to be drawn together and to be held by new bonds of loyalty.

This is the basis of the gang life of boys. At first those interests may be fluctuating, and if so, the make-up of the gang will also make quick changes. But in time strong interests, such as hunting, athletics, stealing and other petty crimes, come to hold the gang fairly stable. The boy often feels that even his home does not understand him as do his peers. Girls also may have their cliques, with all their mutual secret understandings, probably centering round a common personal following of some older girl or woman. The bond of common interest need not be so strong as in a boys' gang. In each case, however, there is likely to be much hero-worship, and that of a concrete sort. Boys admire physical prowess and courage and are not overpar-

ticular about the hero's other characteristics. A Douglas Fairbanks, a "Babe" Ruth, or a Lindbergh, it is all the same. To the junior, David the daring is better than Solomon the wise; Samson the mighty better than John the beloved, because they are men of action. Unless Jesus be presented as a man of strength and courage, he will probably make little appeal to this age. See, for example, Bruce Barton's confession in the opening pages of his book *The Man Nobody Knows.* Girls, on the other hand, are drawn to beauty, grace, good clothes, and sometimes more substantial personal qualities. A mixed group at this age would be a rarity, for just before adolescence is the time of greatest social indifference, if not of antipathy, between the sexes.

While the religious nature awaits a later day for its fullest significance and activity, it would be a mistake to deny to the junior a real religious life. He may conceal it well under a cloak of bravado, but one who has opportunity to know often discovers an underlying feeling and questioning and thought going on. "Dad," he may say, "are you a Christian or an evolutionist?" And pinned down for what lies back of the question, one may find that the boy's mind is responsive to suggestion from newspaper, cartoon, periodicals, and classroom. He is beginning to think, though his thought is often ill-digested. The social stimulus of our present-day way of life tends to make juniors at times seem a bit precocious. Of even greater significance is the occasional evi-

dence that the young life is being shaped with relation to God. We do see at times, when a boy or girl is self-revealing, an emotional reaction to real worship, a promise of the religious life that may soon become an abiding and pervading attitude. We should be ready for some genuine committals to the religious life. On the other hand, the eagerness for numbers, the worship of statistics, often leads to an unfortunate invasion of the junior group in the pursuit of candidates for church-membership. Juniors are very suggestible and can easily be led to respond, even though utterly unprepared in intelligence and experience for this vital step. Indeed, coming from churchly homes, they may join the church, " just to get it over." It is a mistake.

IV. AS ADOLESCENCE BEGINS

The value of what has here been said so briefly in regard to the junior child is in showing us what sort of person our new adolescent already is. Adolescence begins very much as a " handicap " race, in which all do not start from the same line. Again this should restrain us from being dogmatic in our assertions. Certain things may, however, be said in summary:

1. The native tendencies with which the babe began life have now acquired direction, as the child enters adolescence. It is like a stream of water running over a sandy plain that has plowed long enough to have made itself a shallow bed. Left alone, it will cut deeper and deeper, till its

course becomes fixed, though at this early stage it may yet be changed without too great effort. This constitutes a mighty challenge to the worker with boys and girls to analyze and evaluate their lives, and to help turn them toward the highest Christian ideals, while we have the opportunity. The next decade will tell the tale.

2. The individuality becomes more marked, due to many causes. Native capacity and temperament have by now had time to reveal themselves rather clearly. We may know rather surely what sort of person we are dealing with. The general intelligence, of whatever degree, has had time for interaction with the social environment, whatever that may have been, limited and stunted, or rich and varied, and to give rather definite promise of what the life may yet become.

3. The worker with young people has to take material already worked upon and tending to become set. We must, however, beware of thinking of childhood as "plastic clay." That is only half a truth, for childhood is vital and dynamic; it works from within. It may, to be sure, be molded, but it may also refuse to stay "put." It might be better to say that others have shaped the environment in which the boy or girl has already interacted, and the results are tending to become more and more fixed. Thus the adolescent comes to us, a glorious challenge. Time is relentless and will not let us turn back or delay. Instead we must face the bold venture of the next critical years with faith and courage and intelligence.

For Discussion and Observation

1. How far should a church school go in making use of the "mental age" as a basis for grading boys and girls?

2. Cite actual illustrations of the sense of group superiority: from childhood and the home; from school grouping; from various races; from religious affiliations. How well founded are these when viewed from the standpoint of some other group?

3. How do you account for the fighting among junior boys? What should we do about it? Is there anything corresponding to this in junior girls?

4. Ask the librarian of your public library about the books being read by junior boys and girls, the numbers, their character, the most popular ones. What influence for character-making is the library exerting on these juniors? How would you characterize the *Bobbsey Twins* books? The *Tom Swift* books? The *Boy Scout* series? What is the moral influence of the periodicals most read by these juniors?

5. Observe carefully all the boys' gangs and girls' cliques or clubs among the juniors that you can. What is the "tie that binds" in each case? Are these associations harmful? How use this social tendency for the best ends? What can your church do about it?

6. "Man is incurably religious." How far is this true? Is it true of the Eskimo, the African cannibal, the Chinese coolie, the American busi-

ness man? Do you find evidence of a religious instinct?

7. List all the religious customs that are practised in your church, whose origin is obscure or actually lost. Are they worth perpetuating? Could they easily be broken, in view of the sentiments and associations that surround them? How would you prevent children entering into any of them that seemed to you worthless or bad?

8. Can you call to mind any Christian traditions as distinguished from established historic facts? Any that belong to your own denomination? How do you rank these in value as compared with the traditions of your neighbor church of another denomination?

Bibliography

Whitley, M. A.: "A Study of the Junior Child." Westminster, 1923.

Wilson, D. F.: "Psychology of Childhood and Religious Education." Doubleday Doran, 1928.

Chave, E. J.: "The Junior." U. of Chicago, 1925.

Mumford, E. E. R.: "The Dawn of Religion in the Mind of the Child." Longmans, Green, 1916.

——: "The Dawn of Character in the Child." Longmans, Green, 1925.

Allport, F. N.: "Social Psychology." Houghton Mifflin, 1924.

CHAPTER IV

THE PHYSICAL ASPECTS OF ADOLESCENCE

As we have already noted, adolescence constitutes the second of life's outstanding crises. Physically it is the maturing process, the attaining of adulthood. Primitive men lacked, of course, the power of psychological analysis to see that man was not finally mature till the middle of the third decade, and assumed that a boy had become a man as soon as he approached a man's physical height and had attained capacity for sex-functioning. Today we recognize that even physically the maturing process is not finished before about twenty-five. At that age, however, the physical equipment of the individual is complete; he has nothing more to expect in the extension of purely physical growth. We register the children's height on the doorpost year by year, and they laugh over how small they used to be, and eagerly anticipate where they will be next year. But in later adolescence we cease making marks, for there is to be no added height. There may still be increase of skill in the use of the body, but not of its growth. The only noticeable fluctuation in the body in later years, that of bulk and weight, is not a structural or organic change, such as goes on during adolescence, but merely the addition or loss of fat. The mature body being now ready

to reproduce itself, adolescence may also be looked upon as preparation for parenthood.

I. GENERAL ASPECTS

1. Physical Signs of Its Approach. The physical signs of the beginning of adolescence are many and manifest. First there is the rapid growth in height and bulk. This is not always uniform as to rate, extent, or time of beginning, but if there is to be growth, it must come during early adolescence. Mothers are made aware of it when they try to keep clothes adjusted to the changing size of son or daughter. Even the boys of the junior gang become aware of the mysterious change, for do they not lose one "pal" after another because they shoot up and away from them? And, looking on, these juniors wonder who will be next. The junior girls know that a change has come over their older sisters, even though lengthening skirts no longer mark the change. They cease to be children and rapidly become young ladies.

Another physical sign of the transition period is the new development of throat and the accompanying change of voice, so painful to Henry, whose whole range as well as quality of voice must change, often with embarrassing breaking, while his sister Eleanor must pass through little more than a change of quality. Hair also appears on various parts of the body, giving to this first period the name of "puberty," from the Latin *pubes,* which means hair. In particular

the boy's cheeks become covered with a fair down, if not with tell-tale gashes that indicate a secret attempt to get rid of it. And with the coming of the beard, many a youth's complexion loses its childish softness, though his sister may hope to "keep that schoolgirl complexion." Now, too, comes the distinctive rounding of figure that is characteristic of the sexes. It is no longer possible for most boys to masquerade successfully as girls, or girls as boys. Girls, however, approach the mature appearance of figure sooner than boys, and this difference often helps to put a social barrier between those who formerly were good "pals."

Somewhat less evident is the change of growth in the muscle structure, from the larger, more fundamental body muscles, those of back and thigh and arm, to the accessory muscles, those of expression, the more distinctly human muscles. In the first rush of adolescent growth, the larger muscles may take temporary lead, increasing in size and weight, but soon it is the finer muscles of control that make relatively most progress, those of hand and fingers, those of face and foot. This change is of great significance in relation to the very important business of making more adequate adjustment to the physical environment. How man's progress in civilization would have been retarded had we only a child's possible development of muscular skill and control! How impossible for any individual to take his place in the world and compete with his peers, had he not the full use of these muscles of expression!

Instead many are the new fields that now begin to open because finer control becomes possible. When these muscles of skill develop, Alice makes rapid progress with the piano and Ethel with the typewriter. Henry's carpentry begins to have finish about it, while Richard makes good in the laboratory.

2. **Rate of Growth.** In physical development, three stages may for the convenience of our thinking be noted: First, a period of growth, mere increase in bulk and weight; then a period of the exercise of the new body; and finally a period of finishing or maturing. And these are all to be seen in physical adolescence, corresponding in general to the three main divisions of this period. We begin with a sudden, rapid, and uneven development of the body. One part or organ matures more rapidly than another. The skeletal structure grows, notably in arms and legs, giving many inches of added height in a few years. The muscles also grow, but in many cases the more rapid growth of bones means a stretching of these muscles, causing "growing pains." There is need now also that the nervous system be extended to sensitize the enlarging body and to connect its parts. A larger body also calls for larger organs to perform larger functions, larger heart to pump the blood farther, larger lungs to purify it, larger stomach and intestines to furnish fuel and power. If the development of all these were uniform, we should have less occasion to refer to this as a crisis age. Instead the time of beginning and the rate of growth

vary so much as to produce two or three disturbed years at the beginning of adolescence.

This lack of harmony produces often a characteristic awkwardness. For example, the change in the relative height of doorknobs, chairs, tables, and stairs causes many a fumble or fall. Things just simply are not where they used to be! To appreciate the confusion, let an adult reverse the process and imagine himself living in a house that had rapidly shrunk in every dimension! Furthermore, the lack of coordination between new muscles and new nerves means poor balance and control in the expenditure of energy. On the one hand too little is expanded, and things are not done with alacrity and efficiency; or on the other hand power is exerted beyond that which is needed, and dishes are broken and doors slammed.

As the rate of growth begins to slacken, there follows a period of zest in experimenting with the new-found powers and of their hearty exercise, as they now become better coordinated. Hiking, camping, and various forms of athletic sports give outlet to this energy. There seems to be strength without limit for dancing. A high school football-game will often equal or even surpass a college game from the standpoint of the spectator, so far as energy and pluck are concerned, though the latter may exhibit more of intelligent skill. Even feats of hard work will not be unwelcome, if only they give cause for boasting. If these be lacking, horseplay will be resorted to. Tom seeks to break his own best

record, and his sister her scores. Indeed these high school young people need watching lest in their eager zest they overdo physically and incur a debt to their own bodies which later years will have to pay, particularly with the heart.

When later the balance becomes more fully restored, late adolescence may reveal the symmetry and grace of body that belong to adulthood. Now, too, in contrast with the early awkwardness, we may see a very high degree of physical skill and control, though the end of adolescence does not mark the limit of such development. The new coordination, coupled with maturing of bone, muscle, and nerve, brings in many cases the peak of physical power. Normally the body is now in its finest condition for physical achievement, for athletic accomplishment, or for parenthood. It is the ghastly tragedy of war that it consumes first of all young men in late adolescence, in this prime of physical condition.

Reference has already been made to the individual variations in the time and rate of this development process, due to heredity, race, climate, sex, and environment. Professor Irving King calls attention to the fact that while the period of early adolescent growth for the mass of young people extends over a considerable time, from about twelve to sixteen years, the actual time for most individuals is much shorter. The beginning may come as early as twelve or may be delayed to fifteen or even sixteen. The major part of this growth will then be accomplished within the next two years.

3. **Relation to Sex.** From birth the germ plasm that has carried on in unbroken biological connection the stream of life from generation to generation has been present. But while the body cells have been multiplying, as we have seen, the cells of reproduction have been dormant within the body. The arrival of adolescence is marked by a new and rapid increase in their number, till the power of reproduction, so essential to the race and so significant for the individual, is complete. Now, too, all the organs of reproduction, and in the young woman the organs necessary for the care of offspring, come to maturity. For her, too, begins the monthly cycle of menstrual functioning, which may cause trouble at first, if unduly delayed or irregular. In both sexes the new life, even in its purely physical aspects, is far more subtle and pervasive than is evident. The quality of the blood, the sensitiveness of the nerves, particularly in certain secondary sex areas, the general tone of the body, and other things belong to the sex life, and form in part the basis for the emotional life to be discussed later. Of all physical phases of adolescence, this attaining of the powers of parenthood is undoubtedly the one of most far-reaching consequence, for, as we shall see in later chapters, it enters into the emotional life, the social life, and the religious life of the individual. But these wide ramifications of sex combine to keep a person always sex-conscious in some degree, and hence demand intelligence, idealism, and will for their mastery.

II. PARTICULAR PHYSICAL ASPECTS OF ADOLESCENCE

We may note the following phases of adolescent physical growth:

1. **Height.** The average boy adds about one-sixth of his total adult height during the early part of adolescence, growing from about 55 inches at thirteen to a height of 65 inches at sixteen. After this the rate slows down rapidly, ceasing entirely before the end of adolescence. Only the earlier years of childhood show a more rapid proportional growth. Girls get started a year or so ahead of their brothers, and on an average are actually taller than the boys till the fifteenth year, when the boys catch up and pass them. Under the more primitive conditions of life, men had need of larger and stronger bodies than women, for to their lot fell normally the responsibilities for home-building, for food-getting, and for protection. The smaller and more supple bodies of women, on the other hand, are well adapted to their important function of child-bearing, the big, muscular woman often having a far harder ordeal than her apparently weaker sister. In this adolescent growth, body and limb change their proportions, for the rate of increase for the trunk is relatively faster than for the limbs, reversing the conditions of childhood, when legs account for the greater proportion of the height.

It should be noted by all workers with young people that this rapid growth of the earlier years

puts a heavy strain on the whole physique, muscles, nerves, and organs. There is great need of wholesome, well-balanced food, of abundance of sleep, and of rational exercise in the open air, things that are often carelessly neglected by early adolescents. The practise of omitting breakfast, of lunching at a soda-fountain, or of racing through meals to get to school on time or to meet social appointments, is detrimental to good health, as is also the habit of late or irregular hours of sleep. High school and college students often are at a loss to account for lack of energy or of mental alertness, when the actual cause is simply the keeping of late hours. The seeming laziness of younger boys or girls, however, is probably due to genuine and unaccustomed weariness, because the organs are not yet ready to do the work required by a larger body, and this calls for both patience and leniency. How easy to expect a man's work from one who is scarcely more than a child, though having a man's height! The unaccounted "finickiness" in regard to food, which we often find in these younger folk, particularly the girls, also calls for patience. For the simple, wholesome dishes that satisfied the hearty and less discriminating appetite of childhood may cease to be acceptable. More variety is demanded, and strong distaste for certain food may develop. This does not mean that the youth is becoming unreasonable. Rather it is due largely to readjustments taking place in the nervous system. Caution is needed in case the diet becomes ill-balanced to the neg-

lect of some essentials and overfondness for others. For young people at times develop an inordinate appetite for particular and sometimes peculiar articles of food, it may be some dry cereal, or potatoes, or even vinegar or pickles.

Both the rapidity and the unevenness of all this growth disturb many an old association, causing poor coordination and often embarrassing awkwardness. Sympathetic kindness just now, recalling one's own similar experience, will avoid such reference to these conditions as may cause self-consciousness and increased embarrassment. Great harm can be done to a sensitive nature by such unthinking cruelty as joking before others about these early adolescent characteristics.

2. **Weight and Girth.** Following the retardation in the rate of increase of weight, which normally is seen in the junior child, early adolescence shows rapid increase, to be followed by a slowing down in the latter half of the period. Again girls outstrip their brothers for a time, being actually heavier from their thirteenth to their fifteenth years, then again yielding first place to the boys. By sixteen years the rate of increase declines, till full adult weight normally is attained around the twentieth year.

After fourteen, when the first rush of growth is passing and the young person is approaching full height, increasing weight is largely due to an increase also in girth, both of body and of limbs. This normally means a corresponding increase in available power. The muscles which

add much of the new girth make up forty-three per cent. of the weight of the mature body. This phase of development, however, is more subject to variation than some of the others. Malnutrition or disease may prevent the normal increase and leave the youth without a safe reserve in case of prolonged illness or other strain through which he may have to go later. Improper eating, on the other hand, may add girth out of proportion to power, which also is an unhealthy state of things. A slight overweight, however, is more to be desired in adolescence than is any underweight, provided, of course, that it is not due to glandular trouble or other diseased condition. Indeed any noticeable deviation from the normal weight for one's age and height, whether above or below, should be marked and the cause ascertained, and, if possible, rectified.

3. **Brain and Nervous System.** At the beginning of adolescence, the brain has probably attained its full weight and size, or nearly so. During this period, however, there is a rapid development in the number of brain cells, the convolutions of the surface, and the formation of association connections, the physical conditions essential to larger intellectual life, so that by the end of the period the brain is as ready physically to play its part as it ever will be. Associated with the brain in the conscious life of the individual is the elaborate nervous system that connects every part and organ of the body, like a great telegraph system, bringing to the brain over the inferent nerves from every exposed sur-

face knowledge of the outside world, particularly from the special organs of sense, and from within giving warning of any disturbed condition, and in turn carrying back to the muscles along the efferent nerves the response that is to be carried into action and behavior.

Those who have watched the rapid development of some residential section of a city, have seen the telephone system try to keep pace with the expansion, and have experienced the confusion that is likely to occur as lines are reorganized and extended and numbers changed, may understand what happens to the nervous system during adolescent expansion. Nerve-ends seem not to be where they used to be, and sensations arriving at the brain are just unfamiliar enough to cause confusion, till the whole can be reorganized and a new set of associations formed. The change should be normally healthy in all respects, but if it is not, if the nerves have been subjected to overstimulation, we may look for such symptoms as excitability, irritability, fatigue, and depression. The pace of present-day life, the complexity and urge of much of our modern high school activities, whether social or intellectual, are very prone to produce such undesirable results. The matter will be further treated in a subsequent chapter.

4. **Other Organs.** Every part and organ of the body shares the adolescent acceleration of growth and development of function. It would, however, be out of place to attempt to discuss them all, even briefly. The heart, to keep pace with the

enlarging demands made upon it to pump more blood and to send it farther, nearly doubles its size during adolescence. The arteries, on the other hand, increase their capacity at a slower rate, so that for a time there will probably be an increase in blood-pressure. This, however, is not serious as it becomes in later life, and before long the arteries catch up with the heart and restore the normal balance. This increased load put upon the blood-pumping system is likely to bring to light any functional weakness or defect of the heart which may have been unsuspected during childhood, and suggests the advisability of a careful and expert examination before these boys and girls in their physical eagerness put too great a strain on this vital organ.

Adolescent lassitude may be due in some instances to anemia, which may now become evident through failure of the blood to maintain the needed quality and supply to meet the new demand. Such a situation calls for the attention of the family doctor, before it becomes too serious. To keep this blood pure, the lungs also must increase greatly in capacity, and this is the case, particularly with boys, whose rate of breathing becomes slower and of greater volume. Just listen to that boy as he comes home from gymnasium, bragging how high he sent the spirometer, how many more cubic inches of air he can inhale! It is a favorite competition of growing boys. In this connection correct posture, lung-developing exercise, and plenty of fresh air are greatly to be desired.

III. OTHER RELATIONS

1. Environment and the Physical Life. Urban life, which is not the life for which our bodies were orginally prepared, brings many changes that may affect the physical well-being. And this city life is the lot of so many young people, both of those born to it, and of those who move into it at this stage, that the health-producing activities and agencies must be furnished in some other way. In a former day the country offered to the majority of them fresh air, abundance of certain wholesome foods, physical activity, and simplicity of living on the farm. On the other hand, the improved sanitation of the larger cities, the wide variety of diet that is available, the freedom from drudgery, and the variety of interests, all tend to offset the disadvantages of city life. Today, however, with so many urban conditions accessible to every one, due principally to the hard roads and the automobile, the differences between city and rural life are not so marked. The advantage may return to the country. The physical education departments of our public schools, if wisely conducted, and the health instruction in the school curriculum, also help restore the proper balance. The new freedom and activity of girls have their most wholesome aspects, particularly for adolescents. And the semi-recreational organizations, such as the Boy Scouts, the Campfire Girls, and many others, make real contribution to the correcting of the less normal conditions of city life. Organized summer camps,

which have sprung into popularity so rapidly recently, also serve their part for the favored young people who can take advantage of them.

2. **Liability to Disease.** There is added reason to guard the health of the adolescent, for during the years of rapid growth, health is apt to be unstable, the appetite fluctuating, and the whole body prone to lassitude. There is, to be sure, a great increase in bodily power, as every young person in the teens discovers, but much should not be required of it, since so much of it must be drawn upon for the all-absorbing business of growing. Certain diseases, which may have been present during childhood in incipient form, such as tuberculosis, anemia, and goiter, now become more seriously manifest. And in some instances the disturbed physical condition is the basis for marked mental and spiritual distress. Yet on the whole, with all the strain of the rapid changes and readjustments of early adolescence, nature seems also to have supplied greater powers of resistance and recovery, for statistics show this to be the period of low death-rate, the lowest rate being for girls at the age of twelve and for boys at thirteen, just as adolescence is beginning. May it not be that the spiritual forces of hope and expectancy have real tonic effect?

3. **Health and Normal Religious Experience.** Every phase of life comes to expression through the body. Every Christian virtue and grace implies a form of physical behavior. Jesus said again and again, "This *do*." It would seem, then, almost axiomatic that normal religious ex-

perience will be most likely to be found in connection with a healthy body. Indeed, while we are told nothing of the physical development which Jesus attained, it is a perfectly reasonable inference that he was of fine physique, sound and wholesome, for only such a body could adequately express the inner life of such a spirit. Right after the age of twelve, we are told, "he increased in . . . stature," and his adolescent physical development must also have been normal and complete. When for any of us nerves and digestive apparatus are functioning properly, when the blood is pure and the body and brain well nourished, when a healthy sex life makes for normal social relations, when the whole being tingles with buoyancy, power, and endurance, then we may expect to find faith, hope, and love at their finest and best. It may be true that suffering refines some natures, but it is far more likely to be the case that physical weakness will undermine spiritual courage and endurance, that overwrought nerves will produce social and spiritual maladjustment, that indigestion will make it hard to "be kindly affectioned one toward another." Youth, on the other hand, may use this very soundness of body for evil ends, but also may best glorify God through that same fine physique.

For Discussion and Observation

1. Select ten typical high school pupils of your acquaintance, some boys and some girls, and learn concerning them: (1) Hours of sleep per

week; (2) Hours in school; (3) Hours in home study; (4) Hours of physical work; (5) Hours of recreation of various sorts; (6) Time of retiring and of getting up; (7) Time allowed for meals; (8) Nerve-taxing practises and responsibilities. Is the program a wholesome one for young people? How far is high school responsible? How far is home? (This assignment might be distributed among the members of the class, one or two to a person, for observation and written report.)

2. Are school athletics in your town conducted for the benefit of the many or for the overexertion of a few? What may be done to bring about a change of policy, if this be deemed necessary?

3. What differences should be made in the program of physical activities of the Scouts and similar organizations for boys of the country and of the city? Why?

4. Edward, who is thirteen, has become both clumsy and lazy, as compared with his sister Betty, who is ten. Because of this father taunts him, mother nags him, while Betty, with an air of superiority, teases him. What is likely to be the character-result on Edward?

5. Learn as far as you can the ages of those who have set athletic records of various sorts. What age predominates? What does this indicate?

6. What is the minimum legal age for marriage in your state? On purely physical grounds is parenthood at this age wholesome? If not, what

minimum age would seem to be so? Get competent authority for your answers.

7. Was Jesus' healing and restoring of men's bodies an essential part of his ministry, or was it more largely for purposes of publicity? How can we justify a church gymnasium or tennis-court? A medical clinic?

Bibliography

Tyler, J. M.: "Growth and Education," Houghton Mifflin, 1907.

King, I.: "The High School Age." Bobbs-Merrill, 1914.

Moxcey, M. E.: "Physical Health and Recreation for Girls." Abingdon, 1920.

Hall, G. S.: "Youth: Its Education, Regimen, and Hygiene." Appleton, 1916.

Tracy, F.: "The Psychology of Adolescence." Macmillan, 1922.

CHAPTER V

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SEX

Adolescence has been defined as primarily the "time when youth comes to consciousness of sexual functions." (King, *Psychology of Child Development,* p. 223.) This, of course, is but one aspect of the matter. But it is, indeed, so important an aspect, and has such significance as well for the social and spiritual life of youth, as to call for special discussion in a study such as this.

It is doubtless a wholesome thing that there should be a certain instinctive reticence in dealing with the subject, yet the very tabu that in the past has enveloped the matter has proven unwholesome. It has meant that sex has been approached with prudery and shrouded in ignorance. We would not think of sending one to run an electric power-plant who was ignorant of its potentialities, its dangers, and its control. Yet former generations did this very thing with this mighty human dynamic. Boys and girls were left to learn about themselves and life as best they might, and the experience was often distressing or disastrous. There was much hypocrisy. Elders often lived a sex-life, yet by word and manner denied it, as if it were all evil and beneath them. This attitude led to curiosity and secrecy, often to undue sense of guilt, and this in turn to morbidity and shame.

This has, in fact, been the basis of a strong religious appeal recently made to certain adolescents of our land, which begins by fostering a highly exaggerated sense of wrong, on the basis of sex-consciousness, which was in many cases merely normal but ignorant. On the other hand the present-day reaction from Victorian prudery, which has brought the subject of sex out into the daylight, often with wholesome frankness, runs the risk of treating the matter too flippantly, of condoning irregularities, and of encouraging disastrous experimenting. Liberty must not run to license. Let us remember that while Jesus never condoned sex sin, neither did he make it "the" sin alone. Furthermore, being the work of a good Creator, the matter of sex calls for candor and intelligence, for dignity and purity, for self-control, not for complete denial after the manner of the ascetics. Indeed, it cannot be ignored, for the sex impulse, the hunger for another and for offspring, is one of the primary and master motives of life, and is to be found in every normal person. High-minded persons, in the exercise of this function, become sharers in the great and mysterious work of creation.

I. THE PHYSICAL BASIS

1. Development of the Reproductive System. This has already been discussed in a previous chapter. Here we may simply remind ourselves that adolescence begins when the development of the reproductive powers begins. The repro-

ductive cells, which have been present in the body since birth, represent the unbroken biological thread, running back through countless generations to the beginning of animate life on this planet. Each individual is the custodian of this ancient and sacred trust. Each one carries those tiny cells, any one of which, if it meet a cell from one of the opposite sex, will begin multiplying till a new human being emerges, who in turn will carry other reproductive cells to continue the series. It is a kind of sacred and mysterious immortality, this continuous and unbroken stream of life. These cells have, however, been dormant through childhood, while the somatic or body cells have multiplied. But suddenly a change occurs and the reproductive cells in turn begin to increase rapidly in number. Simultaneously the organs of reproduction, and, in the female, the organs also for the care of offspring begin to mature. By fourteen in the male and by twelve in the female parenthood is usually physically possible. But true marriage and parenthood are social relationships as well, needing all of adolescence for their proper preparation. In this men differ from animals.

2. **Blessings and Dangers.** So pervasive and powerful a factor in the physical life as sex is filled with blessings and dangers. If it be normal and healthy, it gives tone and zest to the whole of the physical being. An abounding and urgent sex impulse, kept well in control and largely sublimated into other channels, makes a virile and energetic person, enthusiastic in spirit, dy-

namic in achievement, and magnetic in personality. On the other hand, curiosity regarding all phases of the subject, which is normal and should have been largely met before puberty, if left without wholesome satisfaction, leads easily to secret and even perverted gratification. Abnormal stimulation of the physical desire, whether through suggestions to be found in certain so-called "literature," in off-color movies, in the stories which foul minds like to circulate, and in other places, or through the too free contacts of some dancing, or of "petting," is likely to lead to disastrous consequences, either of a private sort, or in illicit relations, which may begin suprisingly early. One need not be a moral pessimist or a calamity-crier to be shocked at the amount of sex irregularity even within our high schools. Parents should never complacently assume immunity for their own young people, but should know the facts concerning the local situation. Adolescence is the time in which the battle is to be fought out as to whether this impulse is to be master or servant. Inhibition is a first line of attack, and sublimation the second.

3. **Suggestions for Developing Self-control.** Parents and all others who work with adolescents, as well as the young people themselves, need to know the available means of helping to control this powerful force. These may here be only suggested. Some of them should be in operation long before adolescence begins, while others need to be diligently observed throughout the adolescent period. They include early, whole-

some, and correct information, coupled with a frank, yet dignified, attitude regarding the whole experience and function. This is primarily the parents' responsibility. Beginning with a simple, honest, and satisfying answer to the child's query, "Where did I come from?" encouraging frank confidences, and exacting the right to first place as a source of information, any wise parent can be of infinite help to the child and young person. Deceit, lack of candor, or evasion will quickly send the inquirer to some one else who will gladly tell. Too many parents let their young people lose the battle by failure to come to their assistance early enough. Ignorance, lack of sympathetic understanding, or a false sense of pride on their part prevent wholesome instruction. "Such a thing could never come near my darling," they may say, while the playground is already corrupting the child. No child is immune. And because of their attitude, their children are afraid to come to them frankly for help. If parents fail, who should assume responsibility? No one who gives mass information, but rather the church school teacher, the mature Scout master, the pastor, or any one privileged to enjoy the confidence of the young person and himself old enough to have good judgment.

4. **Physical Aids.** Among the physical aids in the control of the sex impulse are health of body, plenty of sleep, wholesome and well-balanced food, exercise to the point of healthy fatigue, and the avoidance of such stimulants as highly spiced food, tobacco, and alcohol. A mind busy

with normal and congenial occupation, with absorbing hobbies, or with clean and enjoyable reading is a great safeguard. For sex activity is the outcome not alone of a physical urge, but also of imagination, which makes the impulse specific and gives it direction. The boy whose mind is a cesspool has little chance of clean living and control, and if other things do not busy the mind, sex will almost inevitably claim the center of attention. An attitude of respect toward oneself and of chivalry toward those of the opposite sex is a powerful help. These should be cultivated from the earliest days. And working in and through all these, there is available the divine aid, which should be constantly and earnestly sought. In case of any irregularity, a wise and helpful physician should be sought at once. Quacks who prey upon young people should be exposed and opposed.

II. SUBLIMATION OF THE SEX IMPULSE

1. The Sex Urge May Find Other Outlet. Marriage in our civilization tends to be postponed till late, owing in part to economic pressure, which makes necessary a much larger earning power before home and family life may be undertaken, in part to the extended education available for so many and the preparation demanded by the professions, and in part to the multiplicity of interests that make the adventure of marriage seem no longer the principal way of escape from the monotony of existence.

For this reason it becomes necessary, in the best interests of both the individual and of society, that the sex impulse be controlled. The long experience of the race shows that the exercise of the present-day much-talked-of "freedom of youth," if it should mean sexual license, can in the end be only disastrous. But in the exercise of that control, sublimation, the directing of this impulse into channels other than the most primitive and obvious, is to be preferred to inhibition, which attempts merely to dam it up; diffusing the sex impulse over as wide a field as possible through imagination, rather than its concentration on a single object.

2. **Examples of Sublimation.** To trace the major part of human behavior to a sublimated sex impulse, as some seem to do, is to exaggerate a truth of life. Yet how many things are in fact extensions of the lover's attitude toward the loved one! It may be amusing to watch a solicitous youth assisting the young lady of his fancy across a damp spot on the sidewalk, though she in turn may be able-bodied enough to outplay him at tennis. Carried on to others, however, this care of his becomes an attitude of kindly consideration, of courtesy, and of protection. Romance prompts to poetry and drama, to worthy sentiment and high idealism. And because commonplace utterance becomes utterly inadequate to express his tender emotion toward Marjorie, the lady of his youthful dreams, Harry breaks into verse and discovers a latent and unsuspected talent, which one day may become no

longer sentimental doggerel, but real poetry. Or again, he must sing love-ditties in her praise, and discovers his gift for music. A single look of approval from a loved one may mean more than all the plaudits of an admiring world as a reward for adventure and achievement. The customs of primitive peoples are filled with demands that a youth achieve something noteworthy before attaining sex recognition and the right to marry. The romances of the days of chivalry harp constantly on this theme. And there is little of modern fiction that does not present the love motive, and little of actual life that does not feel its urge. Even crime and evil acts are often the outcome of the sex desire. Love, indeed, makes the world go round! And wholesome sublimation of sex furnishes much of the driving force. Carried to its highest fruitage, the whole may issue in social and religious interest and activity.

3. **Opportunity of the Church.** The duty of the church should be apparent in all this, namely to see that all the young people of its constituency have abundant opportunity for outlet for this impulse in wholesome activity of various sorts, and to combat to the death every agency that would capitalize the impulse in an unwholesome manner. And not only is the church warranted in actively supplementing other desirable agencies, but it should assert itself in demanding as its right a reasonable amount of the time and energy of its young people. The success of the young people's movement within the church is

traceable in no small degree to the fact that it brought the sexes together in ideals of worship, fellowship, and service. Ask why the local organization ran down, and you will be likely to be told that "the boys stopped coming." There you have it. Sex interest removed, the movement often went flat. Sex interest is a legitimate motive even in the work of the church. And the church, more than any other agency except the home, is charged with the responsibility of directing this great force into the loyal service of the cause of Jesus Christ.

III. THE SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE OF SEX

1. The Love Motive. In view of what has been said, it should be evident that with the awakening of sex a boy or girl becomes in a new sense a social being, due to this urge within. Heretofore the child has been his own center of interest, and this was natural while he was learning about himself. But now interest in others becomes so heightened as to be something almost new. That this interest grows primarily out of sex may be seen in the fact that the highest interest in fiction, the drama, and the movies is in the love-story. Film producers will inject a romance into a scenario, if necessary, to safeguard the receipts at the box-office. And with the budding of adolescence comes this interest which before was scorned. The explanation is this: In the typical junior book, which was a tale of adventure of the Alger or the Tom

Swift type, the boy reader became vicariously the hero, lone figure in a daring exploit or intrepid leader of a bold enterprise. As an adolescent, on the other hand, he first tolerates, then eagerly seeks the love-tale in which he again identifies himself with the hero and finds his interest in his relations with other people and particularly in the heroine's approving reward for his valor. Thus is sex sublimated. The blatant exploiting of sex impulse through sex "literature" and pictures is another matter.

2. **Wider Social Relations.** Gregariousness, the desire to be with people, even to the point of subordinating oneself in order to hold a place in their company, now becomes more manifest. The regard of the loved one may pass not only to other persons right at hand, but even to other classes and races, or it may become strong enough to overcome social and race prejudice. And if there be native capacities for leadership, they will begin to reveal themselves in these new social relations. These, too, are sublimations of the sex impulse. Now, too, out of the desire for the affection and approbation of others will arise a new interest in oneself. Tommy suddenly begins to clean his shoes and to wash behind his ears without being told that he must. He has become more conscious of himself as he beholds himself reflected in the mirror of other people. Concern for his dress, regard for his manners, even vanity and affectation, are evidences of a new social consciousness. The pursuit of achievement and honors, athletic, scholastic, scientific,

even at sacrificial cost, grows out of the same desire for recognition.

3. **Social Relations of the Sexes.** Certain social relationships, which have their basis in sex and are usually present during adolescence, may well be kept in mind by all who have to do with young people. Just before puberty the sexes tend to draw apart. George scorns any article of clothing that might be dubbed "sissy" by the "fellows," while his sister cannot be induced to wear shoes with catch eyelets because they are too boyish. And even if an occasional tomboy wants to wear clothes like her brother's and to play football or marbles with him and his friends, they would feel a bit sheepish to be caught letting her do so. Junior boys rarely seek girls or girls boys for companionship. This is in part due to the fact that girls enter the new land of adolescence from a year to two years earlier than boys, thus creating a wide psychological gap between girls and boys of the same age.

Soon after adolescence begins for both boys and girls, however, there appears a mutual interest and attraction between the sexes. Often this is at first so shy as scarcely to reveal itself. Girls are likely to turn to boys older than themselves, while the boys may reverse this and turn to younger girls. But the new interest is apt to be at first in the opposite sex in general, and only later in a particular individual. The first intense case of "puppy love," so real and apparently so lavished on an individual, often turns out to be of the former sort. He may be found in any

high school, so in love that he thinks he would die for his lady, yet suddenly changing the object of his adoration without a pang of regret. Gradually, however, in middle, and more particularly in late, adolescence, the attractive traits of individual personality play a more important part, and such alliances more often become permanent. Either there is an early, and, it may be, an ill-advised marriage, or there may be an agreement that necessitates a long waiting. If in the latter case the young man continues his professional training or otherwise expands his horizons, while the girl merely stands still and waits, a sense of loyalty on his part may hold him to a marriage that can bring them little but unhappiness. True to the trait revealed in other matters also, the middle adolescent is likely also to conform much to public opinion as to the correct manner of revealing his amorous feelings. If Helen is to "go" with Charles, she expects him to treat her as other boys treat the girls of their choice. And Charles expects as much of Helen. Girls, for example, sometimes allow unwelcome liberties simply because they believe that the only alternative is to become a "wall-flower," a "flat tire," and this, of course, would seem intolerable to any spirited girl. A boy would equally dread being called slow. It is hard to resist the group standards. "They all do it," the accepted code of this age, may be very wholesome or may be fraught with grave dangers. Can the church or any of its agencies do anything to help mold the public opinion of its own young people?

4. **Characteristic Traits in Courtship.** We may note also certain traits of the two sexes, which play their primary rôle in courtship, and which make their marked appearance in adolescence. In cruder form, it may be, these are often seen in the lower animals as well. Typical masculine traits are boldness, aggressiveness, courage, jealousy, protecting care, and even roughness. It is characteristically feminine to admire these traits in a man and even to play upon them just for amusement. To see a man perform a feat of unusual courage or even of foolhardiness at her request or on her behalf, or to see him torn with jealousy, often gives a girl intense satisfaction. Perhaps these traits are left over in present-day men from a primitive stage in which our distant male ancestors had to secure and hold their mates by conquest. But at any rate, so deeply rooted are they that even the present social ideal that would minimize the differences between the sexes cannot obscure them. Young ladies rarely avail themselves of the privileges of leap year to usurp the place that belongs to man to be the aggressor in all these relations. And with good reason, for most men would consider it effeminate to play the opposite rôle and be sought. Instead young women exhibit such feminine traits as coyness, modesty, coquetry, and tenderness, and these are most powerful in drawing on masculine aggression. These lists might be greatly extended.

5. **Marriage and Parenthood.** Finally in this general connection it should be noted that late

adolescence involves for many the highly important social relationships of marriage, parenthood, and home-making, while for others these follow soon after adolescence is ended. It is, to be sure, the physical relationship that ultimately distinguishes marriage from friendship and that makes the monogamous union the only right one, but happy marriage is even more a social and spiritual relationship. This fact is often overlooked, particularly by those who enter wedlock during adolescence. In consequence the majority of wrecked marriages are primarily due to maladjustment of the two persons, rather than because either of them has yielded to the physical charms of another. True marriage on its social side is a complete blending of personalities. For this there must be, first of all, two temperaments that may reasonably be harmonized. There must be a hearty mutual respect of the two without loss of wholesome self-respect on the part of either. There should be common interests for leisure time and common ideals for all time. Frank confidence must be met with answering trust. Sympathetic willingness to share "for better or for worse" will be needed, as also a respect for, if not a sharing of, each other's religious life.

Furthermore, marriage should normally mean parenthood, with at least two children. One child in a home will often receive more attention from his parents than is good for him; he will grow, especially in the earlier years, in a world that lacks companionship of his own equals; and the

parents will never experience their relationship to a child of the other sex. If there be two boys and two girls, every possible family relationship is represented. Sociologically this makes the complete family unit. What a responsibility is thus placed upon the parents, who by precept, but even more by example, should take primary place in preparing these children for right and effective living in all their later social contacts, as useful citizens of their country and as good members of the Kingdom of God.

Some enter into marriage and parenthood intelligently prepared for their responsibilities. Many more stumble painfully along by trial and error, grimly determined to make a go of it and to retain their respectability. But how many make a tragic mess of it all! How better could churches and parents and all leaders of youth make use of the years of adolescence than by avoiding all this social wastage through wise and adequate training in this much neglected field, specially in view of the fact that marriage and parenthood will be the normal outcome of adolescent life.

IV. THE RELIGIOUS SIGNIFICANCE OF SEX

"It is the social character of the sexual nature which makes it so important in religion," says Professor Ames. But the religious nature of man is not born at adolescence; it is not solely dependent on the sex impulse. Such tendencies as dependence, awe, wonder, and fellowship,

which may later find religious expression, and which together form the psychological basis of the religious life, are inborn. Man is not born with a religion, but is, even at birth, potentially religious. Childhood has had such genuine foregleams in its responses to these tendencies as to constitute real religion, however crude and incomplete. But the awakening of sex, the broadening horizon of the social life, and the new significance of religion are inseparably bound up together and are all manifestations of adolescence. Out of sex comes the new social interest, and social interest in other persons, sufficiently enlarged, includes also God, the supreme Person. And if God enter this circle of persons, he is received with such characteristically religious attitudes as reverence, mystery, fear, loyalty, and love. Some religions exploit sex. Christianity refines it, but still feels its urge.

The sublimation of the sex impulse, as we have seen, diverting its energy and drive from its most primitive expression into other spheres of action, may further lead to high idealism, even to interest in remote and difficult enterprises, manifestations of religion at its best. It may lead also to those virtues which we choose to call Christian, such as purity, kindliness, courtesy, pity, generosity, self-denial, fidelity, patience, and love. And the self-control growing out of the inhibition of the impulse makes also for the strongest of character.

> My strength is as the strength of ten
> Because my heart is pure,

is good adolescent psychology as well as good poetry. Finally the gregariousness incited by this impulse tends to foster the institutional relationships of religion, of which the church is the most prominent and most imporant. Youth is pre-eminently the time for joining the church. It will thus be seen that in these and other indirect ways sex plays a real part in the religious life, and together they reach their full significance with adolescence.

For Discussion and Observation

1. Is the consciousness of sex desire sinful? At what point does it become so? What did Jesus say about this in the Sermon on the Mount? Is it not true that misunderstanding on the first of these points causes a great deal of morbid self-condemnation among young people? Who should help them to a better understanding? How?

2. Undoubtedly the young people of today are far more fully informed on all matters of sex than those of a generation ago. Is this of itself more wholesome or less? Why?

3. Since the subject of sex is thrust on them from all sides, beyond the possibility of escape or ignorance, wherein lies the greatest safety for them? Will the best control come from within or without?

4. Cite cases from literature or from life in which a youth has been spurred to achievement in any worthy line by the desire for approval on the part of the girl of his choice. With such in

mind, consider the power for good which a young woman may hold.

5. Some larger church schools organize by dividing certain ages on the basis of sex, making a separate Boys' Department and Girls' Department. If this should be done, what ages should be included in these departments? At what age should they reunite?

6. What is to be said on the moral and social side in favor of coeducation? In favor of separate schools for young men and women? From these considerations, would you favor mixed classes for late adolescents in the church school? What service is rendered by the young people's society (of whatever name) on this point?

7. Name as many things as possible that a church may do to foster wholesome relations between young people of the opposite sexes. Does the problem differ in country and in city? If so, think it out in terms of your own situation. What more should you do than you are doing?

8. In view of the mounting number of divorces, the tragedy of broken homes, the subtle and alluring doctrine of "companionate marriage," what may the church do for its young people to help prepare them for happy and permanent marriage?

Bibliography

Downing, E. R.: "The Third and Fourth Generation." U. of Chicago, 1918.

Royden, A. Maude: "Sex and Common Sense." Putnams, 1922.

Hall, W. S.: "From Youth to Manhood." Association, 1909.

Addams, Jane: "A New Conscience and an Ancient Evil." Macmillan, 1912.

Groves, E. R.: "Wholesome Marriage." Houghton, 1927.

Eddy, Sherwood: "Sex and Youth." Doubleday Doran, 1928.

CHAPTER VI

THE LIFE OF FEELING

Among the many changes that belong to adolescence none is more striking or more important than is the development of the life of feeling. Sixteen-year-old Ruth would be ashamed to display the anger, the fear, or the extravagant glee of her little sister. She has learned to control and perhaps to hide these feelings. At the same time she will exhibit new feelings of loyalty to her friends, altruism to other people, and reverence toward God, or it may be of snobbishness toward the girl down the street, of which little Emily is incapable. What has happened to her? What mean these changes?

I. THE MEANING AND FUNCTION OF EMOTION

1. The Nature of Emotion. Every one of us has felt happy, or angry, or afraid. We recognize these and a host of other feelings as fundamental in conscious life, yet who will adequately describe just what it is to be angry? I feel angry when I *see* a man beat his horse, or when I *hear* some one say something mean about my own people. In other words, my feelings may be aroused by what comes to me through my senses. Again I feel angry when I *think* of the

evils of child labor. That is to say, an idea may arouse feeling. These things heard and seen and thought are not feelings, however, but only the causes of them. And when I am angry I do certain things. I clench my fists to strike a blow; I grit my teeth; my heart beats faster, and color mounts to my cheeks; I speak with explosive language; I form deep resolves. Welling up from within from the depths of my body comes a quick and increased strength to heart and muscles in preparation for carrying out these resolves, however difficult or hazardous they may be. So the movie director instructs the actor to "register" anger. With no feeling of anger in his heart, he assumes the attitude and facial expression of an angry man; he does the things an angry man would do under the circumstances; and we understand as well as if he were actually angry. That means that inner feeling may be recognized through behavior. If the feeling be slight or if it be well in control, it may require a delicate instrument to reveal the quickened pulse, the deeper breathing, and other physical activities, responses which have been substituted as outlets for feeling in place of the usual and perhaps undesirable ones. But whether manifest or obscure these actions are but the responses to feeling and not the feeling itself. What is that reality of which we are so clearly aware? Let us reply by agreeing with Woodworth that "emotion is a stirred-up state of the individual" (*Psychology*, p. 118), and then proceed to illuminate this abstract answer by show-

ing what it does, particularly in the case of our adolescents.

2. **Feeling Tends to Reveal Itself in Appropriate Action.** There is a difference of opinion among psychologists, into which we need not go, as to whether there is a causal relation between feeling and action, and as to the order in which they appear. Is a boy angry because he fights, or does he fight because he is angry? Or are these but coincident results of some common stimulus? Probably the truth is that the stimulus not only arouses a tendency to respond in a certain way, but also stirs up a state of bodily preparedness or emotion which also seeks that response as an outlet. When, for example, the Samaritan on the Jericho road saw the wounded traveler by the roadside and thought about him enough to realize his sad plight, reason told him the man needed immediate aid and that he was the only one available to give it. But the sight also stirred within him those vague bodily conditions which together we call a feeling of pity, which found best satisfaction and outlet in rendering first aid. And as he helped, his pity grew, and the more pity he felt, the more willingly he helped. This would seem like perpetual motion, were it not that soon other things crowd into the field of attention, and the circuit becomes broken.

Most ideas that thus make their way into the center of attention stir up some degree of feeling. But here any one of a number of things may happen. The idea may meet so little re-

sponse as to produce slight feeling or action, like a weak battery that will not start your car on a wintry morning. This, it is to be regretted, is what happens to many of the religious and altruistic emotions aroused by our preaching and worship. And again other things, such as reason, principle, or desire, may hinder the action that normally would follow a given feeling, and may cause it to find some other, perhaps less obvious, outlet, as when Sarah, whose fear of thunder would still send her to hide in a closet as she did when a child, uses her adolescent reasoning and remains in the room with others, her fear causing only a tightening of muscles, a quickening of heart-beat, and deeper breathing. Or, if the situation be less simple, more than one feeling may contend for expression, the stronger getting right of way. So with the Samaritan, customary race antagonism which would have sent him indifferently on his way, may have given place to a stronger feeling of pity.

3. **Feeling Settles into an Established Behavior Trend.** Another function of the feeling experience is to stimulate the feeling power and move it forward toward established behavior trends, toward ideals, attitudes, and sentiments. The young doctor deliberately steels himself against certain feelings toward the ailments and sufferings of his patients, and develops at last a professional and necessary lack of feeling. The minister, on the other hand, just as deliberately allows his feelings to come to expression. He develops a technique for immediate and appropriate

outlet for that stirred-up condition within him which we call sympathy, "feeling with" his people in their suffering. Some of the rest of us experience the same pity, but are at a loss how to let it out adequately and tactfully. Again, the college "pep" meeting is designed by all the arts of song, story, hero-worship, and ritual, heightened perhaps by the feeling of mystery that accompanies a bonfire by night, to arouse in a heterogeneous and disunited group of freshmen a new emotion of aggressive loyalty. The very act of gathering wood for the big fire rouses that feeling. The "fresh" is ready next day to yell himself hoarse in support of his school team, or to bet his last dime, if that be the customary way of expressing loyalty. Repeated often enough, this procedure produces at last the senior, whose "college spirit" has settled to an established, though less boisterous, behavior trend, and who is ready to pledge his undying fealty to his Alma Mater. His reason tells him there are many other good colleges in the land, but his feeling would not allow him to accept a degree from any one of them. Repeated emotional experience then tends to build up ideals, those goals of endeavor which are held to be of worth, fixed attitudes, which determine so largely the probable response to a situation, and sentiments. And these are essential factors in character.

4. **Primary and Derived Emotions.** Furthermore emotions are of two sorts, primary and derived. The former are instinctive and simple,

such as appear at once in practically all childhood. Here the connection between situation, feeling, and response is speedily made. In such cases, too, the general form of the ensuing action seems to be relatively fixed in the race. Some pleasurable activity of the child, for example playing with a favorite toy, is hindered. Instantly there is stirred up within the child a feeling of anger, and impulsively he cries and strikes. Ideals, principles, and reason have no place in the procedure. We love childhood just because it is so spontaneous and expressive—or perhaps for the same reason we find it very trying. Derived emotions, on the other hand, which are the products of social experience and are much more complex, are not so universally felt. They have to do with finer social adjustments. The factors that combine to produce such feelings are many and complex, while the form which the resulting action will take is by no means assured. Take, for example, such feelings as patriotism, altruism, vocational satisfaction, and love. Patriotism is not instinctive. The little child has first to learn to think in terms of country. He must hear her hero tales, catch the loyal attitude of others, realize her worth, and interpret the symbolism of her flag. But how will he express his feeling? One takes it out in fireworks and flag-waving, another in intelligent voting, and another in taking up arms in her defense. The possible responses are many, though in each case it is the same general emotion. Again altruism is contrary to the child's

instinctive desire for self-expression and satisfaction. He must learn to think in terms of others, by imagination to put himself in the place of others, and so to feel with them. This may require a long time, perhaps even into adolescence. The things which he may then do are too many to enumerate. In fact, they differ with each situation. These derived emotions begin to appear in the life of adolescence, with its newer powers of reasoning, with its clearer social consciousness, and its expanding social and religious experience.

5. **Pedagogical Significance.** The pedagogical significance of all this should not be overlooked. Primary emotions may need to be reconditioned as to stimulus, or perhaps redirected as to expression. Fear, for example, may be wholesome or otherwise according to what arouses it and what behavior issues from it. The little child's fear of a Negro because his skin is black must be gently but surely overcome. His fear of fire is at first a great safeguard and should be cultivated. There is a world of difference between a child's outburst of temper and Jesus' deep, controlled, but terrible indignation, when he cleansed the temple. The emotion is the same. But where the child's anger is quickly aroused by the thwarting of his own self-centered desire and may issue in an uncontrolled tantrum in which he screams and bites and destroys, Jesus' anger came only as a result of a social wrong and an insult to his Father, and its outcome was definitely designed to help right that wrong.

Too often workers with young people will find primary emotions in their primitive state, or worse still, running wild in unsocial or even anti-social channels, and waiting a wise and guiding hand.

The derived emotions that go with the most desirable social behavior must be definitely cultivated as vital factors in character-formation. This can be accomplished by bringing about favorable life situations in order that the learner may experience the accompanying emotional glow. Let this be repeated till the emotion has become a fixed possession with a technique for ready, efficient, and desirable expression. Here is one of the great values of project teaching as over against mere informational instruction. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" may be but empty words when mastered as a memory exercise, but when that class of fourteen-year-old girls buy dolls with their own money, sew dresses for them with their own hands, and then actually deliver them themselves to less privileged children in hospital or orphanage, the words glow with a radiant warmth of feeling, the girls are eager to do it again, and a real step has been taken toward a settled altruism.

II. THE EMOTIONAL LIFE OF ADOLESCENCE

1. Adolescent Emotions Stronger and More Refined. Probably no aspect of adolescent life is more pronounced and characteristic than is this life of feeling. In the derived group, entirely

new objectification of the feelings is experienced, while the range of the primary feelings is enlarged. All feelings are capable of running more deeply, less like the ripples on the water's surface, and more like the undercurrents. The quality of the emotions may also be more refined. No longer is there enjoyment merely of strong primary colors, which childhood wanted, but now delight in the pastel shades of a sunset or the delicate coloring of a seashell. Not just the strongly marked rhythm of a band-played march, but now a response to the emotional appeal of the subtler harmonies of the orchestra. Sympathies that may discover and share the hidden experience of others, may replace the strong and abrupt feelings of childhood.

2. The New Basis.

(1) *Physical.* These new symptoms are to be explained in part by the expanding physical life of adolescence. The nervous system, for example, not only is enlarged, but is also refined, so that it is capable of registering shades of sensation never before suspected. George, who is musical, really suffers when the choir is just a shade off key. Margaret can name and distinguish sixteen varieties of silk stockings, which to her younger brother are just "pink." The new sex life, as already indicated, influences nearly the whole of the emotional experience in keen and vivid fashion, not alone through the highly sensitized organs of sex, but also through the secondary centers of sensation and through the sympathetic relation of the whole nervous

system. And we are only beginning to know the tonal and emotional effect of the ductless glands, the "endocrine glands," whose secretions are discharged into the blood-vessels and carried to all parts of the body to give freshness, strength, and endurance beyond normal. These are now functioning. In the first rush of this physical life, the emotional instability is in part due to the lack of coordination in development, physical outrunning nervous control. Many sensations there are that add materially to the life of feeling, which are nevertheless so subtle as to be overshadowed by stronger sensations. Such was the case when the deaf man said he wanted to "listen" to the music of the piano, then sat with his head against the side of the instrument, enjoying the pleasurable sensation of its vibrations. Those same vibrations, unrecognized by any others, were adding to the enjoyment of the whole company.

(2) *New Social Relationships.* The new consciousness of "I and Society" introduces a large field for emotional life. New relationships are formed and the old ones have new significance—family, gang, fraternity, school, and nation. And in relation to each of these are the appropriate feelings. Noticeably is this the case with lover and beloved. And in so far as religion is social, in the new adolescent life lie great and varied occasions for emotions of many sorts and degrees.

(3) *Intellectual Expansion.* Furthermore the expanding intellectual horizons bring new real-

ization of relationships, new sense of values, new range of interests, and so an enlarged emotional life. What a thrill a youth may feel who for the first time catches the social import of Jesus' message! What emotions when first he reads the history of the land from which his family has sprung! Or when first he follows through the course of a great scientific discovery! Civic, industrial, racial, and international relations, history, the fine arts, in some degree, whether adequate and correct or not, push their way into the attention of the young person. These cause a realignment of old feelings and the experience of more complex ones. The old feeling of awe and respect with which Ralph as a child viewed the local policeman, may change to disgust and indignation, if he should discover that the force is weakened by graft, inefficiency, and the control of corrupt politicians. The fear that once gripped Lucy when she met a foreign workman may give way to a feeling of appreciation when she learns how human he is after all and what a wealth of racial culture lies back of him. And so the illustrations might be multiplied.

3. **Emotional Life of Each Period.**

(1) *Emotional Chaos* (*Early Adolescence*). Since the early adolescent is neither child nor adult, but a confusing mixture of the two, we are likely to find also a confusion of emotions, the primary still strong, the derived awakening but ill defined. Helen may feel altruistic one moment and jealous the next. The patriotism (derived emotion) with which Edgar expands on

Memorial Day quickly evaporates before his anger (primary emotion) when he is forbidden to march with the Scouts in the annual parade. The derived emotions, too, being relatively new, may be unstable as to their objects; they have not yet become settled attitudes. Charles may be loyal to his Scoutmaster today, quickly promising to do whatever he is asked to do, but tomorrow he may be so indifferent as to fail in fulfilment. Extremes of exaltation and depression may follow each other, for life is inconsistent and lacks the necessary perspective. Swayed to and fro by these unfamiliar emotions, the child-man often imagines the experience to be unique; no one ever passed this way before. And fearing ridicule, if the matter should be revealed, he may shroud himself in an impenetrable reticence. Even mother, who has thought she knew her boy through and through, is baffled to understand him. This, then, is apt to be the age of "misunderstood" boys and girls. And why should this be surprising, since they so greatly misunderstand themselves? Who has patience to stand guard and to wait sympathetically for this stage to pass? Youth needs such friends.

At this time of life, if there be any native emotional or temperamental weaknesses, they are fairly sure to reveal themselves, when the many new demands are being made. Hysteria is one of these typical weaknesses. Sex perversion is another. Other examples might easily be added. In extreme cases of emotional chaos there appears an occasional suicide, as statistics show.

We shall not look for this, but, on the other hand, we should not be blind to it as an extreme possibility.

(2) *Desire for a Thrill (Middle Adolescence).* Less afraid of the new feelings, the high school youth, on the contrary, often wants to experiment with them to see what kind of "kick" can be got out of them. To experience a thrill, to "have a good time," often becomes the goal of life. This curiosity may, on the other hand, lead on to new discoveries with all their attendant excitement. Mechanics, radio, history, literature, and other fields hold many wholesome and desirable experiences for the one who will explore. Indeed, youth may be "born again" in more then one realm, a fact which has great vocational significance. On the other hand, this desire for a thrill easily leads to such extremes of excitement as are found in gambling, sexual vice, drunkenness, and crime. Those who have access to the facts concerning high school life in our country know that these offenses are appallingly prevalent, and that the schools of small cities, towns, and villages are as likely to be corrupted as those of the larger cities. The records of our courts show that offenders in these matters are recruited in startling numbers from this very age. Again, our commercialized amusements need close watching, for they capitalize this desire of youth, knowing that few homes can offer adequate recreation and normal fun, and often for gain satisfy it recklessly and without principle.

(3) *Control and Development* (*Late Adolescence*). Emotion is such a profound character factor, depending for its worth both on its cause and on its outcome, that in late adolescence we should aim to be bringing it under control, and in so far as it may be desirable, we should be cultivating it. This may be done because the feelings are now better defined, and their objects more fixed. Such should be the altruistic feelings, such the dominating loyalties, such the love between man and woman, such the emotions of the religious life. And the method of cultivating these emotions is just the laboratory method, development through actual experience. The evil situations are to be avoided, so that they may not become the settled cause of emotions, while wholesome experience is to be sought in order to discover and cultivate the "feel" of it and to develop a desirable technique for its discharge. To talk about being brave will not be enough. The youth must act bravely or he will never know what it feels like. Adulthood should be entered with the emotional life running strong and full, capable of giving force and drive to all worthy endeavor, yet with the feelings recognized and brought into control. Hysteria is weakness; stoicism is unsocial.

4. **Opportunities and Dangers in the Emotional Life.** What opportunities and what challenge the emotions present for the worker with youth! The teacher or leader must acquire skill in cultivating the feeling life. On the other hand certain dangers are to be noted and avoided. Over-

stimulation has an evil character effect, a danger that lurks in the movies, in current literature, in dancing, in "petting," and in other places. Highly emotionalized revivalism may easily become harmful under some circumstances. For emotions aroused and enjoyed for their own sake, while failing to find proper expression, become immoral. Simple pleasures lose their interest. The emotional dose must be stronger and stronger, till at last the bored and blasé youth wanders about hunting for something that may still have a "kick" in it for him, even perpetrating a dastardly crime just to see how it feels. It is not necessary, however, to go this far. One might remain a model of propriety in his outward personal life, and yet be guilty of vicarious immorality, secretly sucking the honey of a thrill out of the evil experience of another. A youth might remain a craven at heart, while satisfying his desire to be conspicuously brave by living vividly in imagination the life of his heroes, whether of fiction or of the screen. Such a boy needs to be thrust out into actual life where personal bravery will be demanded of him, if he is not to go under. The emotion that issues in action will cultivate bravery. In like manner all the emotions need to be evaluated, and only those allowed to be repeatedly aroused which may also find expression in desirable behavior.

5. Adolescence and Worship. Worship, which is the heart of the essentially religious experience, will be discussed later. Here it should be noted, however, that it is undoubtedly the great-

est means of stirring and cultivating the social and religious emotions. The professional evangelist or revivalist knows this and has built up a technique of song, story, suggestion, sentiment, and appeal to make effective use of it for his distinct purpose. This purpose is worthy and legitimate, but we must be on our guard lest susceptible young people under his spell merely indulge in an orgy of emotion, without letting it carry across into real life. One shrinks from the irreverence discovered in the emotions implied in such lines as are often thoughtlessly sung:

> And He walks with me, and He talks with me,
> And He tells me I am His own;
> And the joys we share as we tarry there,
> None other has ever known.

On the other hand, true worship is an art, needing intelligent and purposeful cultivation. If the youth can understand its elements, acquire its skills, and cultivate its attitudes, he may learn to see life in true perspective, he may find himself reaching out to his fellow men in genuine brotherliness, and, with lofty aspiration, may relate himself to God and the eternal realities. Young people are quite ready for this. To illustrate this: one of the hymns most called for by the boys in the Allied Army on the eve of battle during the World War was:

> When I survey the wondrous cross
> On which the Prince of Glory died,
> My richest gain I count but loss,
> And pour contempt on all my pride.

III. ATTITUDES

Attitudes are born of emotion. They represent settled feeling. An attitude may be defined as an habitual set of the mind toward an object or group of objects, which tends largely to determine the type of one's behavior toward that object or group of objects. The way I treat a particular alien may be a matter of habit. I meet Tony every morning and get from him my paper. He greets me with a grin and a "Howdy." It is always the same bright spot in the morning, and I respond with a cheery "Hello, Tony," and feel kindly toward him. That is my habit. But I have an attitude toward aliens in general that they are out of place in our society, that they are a nuisance, that we ought not to admit so many of them to our country, and so on. So I am prepared to treat each alien I meet, whether one I have seen before or a new one, with contempt, expressing this feeling, it may be, in a different manner each time, yet always so it can be described as contemptuous. Again, Frank may habitually treat his sister with all chivalry, yet have an immoral attitude toward women of less favored social position. When a situation arises, the associated emotions that determine one's attitude rush to the front and present the response which they dictate. It is hard to overcome this influence, if there be need to do so.

1. **Where Attitudes Come From.** They come almost wholly from the social environment. For the little child they come from the primary

group, from family and playground. Then they are absorbed unconsciously and without reason from social custom. Why? Just because every one feels that way and acts that way—mother, father, teacher, and the rest. In adolescence, with its competing and conflicting social contacts, they come largely from the most influential group. For many boys and girls the powerful influence is the high school. David R. Porter, writing in *Religious Education* (June, 1909), and reporting a survey of such schools, calls attention to the fact that there is a school social group apart from the teachers and their ideals, and little influenced by the moral tone of the community at large. This purely student group has its own "school spirit," too often characterized by dishonesty, dirty athletics, impurity, and selfishness. How shall we capture this group to build up within it better attitudes and ideals for all concerned? Or if necessary, how shall we replace this group with a more appealing group with better attitudes? Herein lies the greatest value of the Scouts, the Girl Reserves, and similar organizations. Here is the great opportunity for the young man who will give himself to a group of boys, as their teacher and friend, or a woman who will lead a group of girls.

2. **How Attitudes May Be Deliberately Modified or Acquired.**

(1) *From the Dominant Group.* In our complex modern life, the adolescent usually belongs to many groups, each with its own loyalties and its characteristic attitudes. Where groups come

into competition, the dominant loyalty is likely to prevail. For example, Lucille comes from a home whose attitude toward people is generous and democratic. She enters a college sorority whose customary attitude is snobbish and exclusive toward girls of limited means. Which attitude will be hers? She may deliberately think it out and decide for herself, but far more likely she will blindly follow the lead of the dominant loyalty, be it home or the college circle. Wherever, then, a choice of groups may be made, as in joining a club, the young person might base his selection on the attitudes he wishes to avoid or to cultivate. The illustration is not far-fetched, for just such a situation is in mind.

(2) *From Individuals.* Those persons whom we admire easily bequeath to us their attitudes as dominating ones. Because of our devotion we acquire them easily and unconsciously. And no age is more susceptible to hero-worship than is adolescence, especially the early years. How vital, then, to introduce youth to worthy and captivating heroes!

(3) *From Ideals.* These develop spontaneously or are deliberately sought, and help shape our attitudes. We gradually evolve those pictures of the imagination to which we give our admiration and toward the attainment of which we bend our energies. And our attitudes tend to keep in harmony with those ideals. It will make a difference in Edward's attitude toward alien labor whether his ideal is found in a relentless, successful, money-seeking corporation

manager, or in one who makes his life one of service. It will be well, however, for the religious educator to remember that for most young people Jesus is scarcely available as an ideal. He seems too remote. He is not well understood. It is hard to fit him into our environment, our life-situations. Two tasks then present themselves. First to set up worthy, but more accessible ideals, and then so to interpret Jesus that he may at length become the one "altogether lovely." As helping to form ideals, too much cannot be said of the importance of the reading which the young person may do.

(4) *Interest of Religious Education.* The religious educator will recognize and seek to direct all these character-forming forces, seeing that in them some of the best tools of his trade are to be found and that during adolescence will be formed those attitudes that will go far to shape the rest of life. He will remember that in every situation there is a Christlike attitude, which, when acquired, tends to efficient Christian behavior. In particular he will seek to interpret the attitudes toward self, such as respect, pride, inferiority, and so on; toward the family, including marriage, divorce, home, parenthood; toward work and money; toward law, the opposite sex, other races and social groups, international relations, and religion.

For Discussion and Observation

1. Cite cases, from your own observation, if possible, in which a middle adolescent, not really

bad at heart, has, nevertheless, been found guilty of serious misdemeanor, when his motive was almost solely a desire for adventure. Note how the imposing of rules often invites their infraction, just for the excitement of the risk of being caught. How can we turn this craving for adventure into channels of wholesome satisfaction?

2. Cite several exhibitions of feeling from the life of Jesus. Recalling the incident of the cleansing of the temple, do you think the feeling of anger can ever issue in desirable action?

3. Select a dozen of the best hymns for adolescents, having in mind their power to arouse or express normal and noble feeling. On the same ground analyze with discrimination some of the hymns most used in your young people's meetings. Is the hymn-book you use competent to express the best adolescent feelings? What can you do about it?

4. What emotional dangers for adolescents may lurk in the high-pressure type of evangelism?

5. What is the prevailing attitude in your local high school group toward Negroes, Jews, Catholics, aliens? What would be a genuinely Christlike attitude in each case? (In your answer beware of mawkish sentimentalism!)

6. Cite from your own observation a case of an adolescent who made an important decision on the basis of his ideals. What part do ideals play in the formation of character?

7. Contrast the feelings of an eight-year-old

and an eighteen-year-old when confronted with the death of a loved one. What makes the difference?

8. Do you know of a case in which a worthy attitude, ideal, or loyalty, developed through a Scout troop, a Sunday-school class, a young people's society, or any other church agency, has really functioned in an adolescent's life to help produce more worthy character?

Bibliography

Gates: A. I.: "Elementary Psychology." Macmillan, 1927.

Mudge, E. L.: "Varieties of Adolescent Experience." Century, 1926.

Tracy, F.: "Psychology of Adolescence." Macmillan, 1922.

Addams, Jane: "The Spirit of Youth in the City Streets" (Chap. 3). Macmillan, 1909.

Betts, G. H.: "How to Teach Religion" (On attitudes). Abingdon, 1919.

Woodworth, R. S.: "Psychology." Holt, 1921.

CHAPTER VII

THE INTELLECTUAL ASPECTS OF ADOLESCENCE

It was John Fiske, who, a generation or so ago, called attention to the significance of the prolonged childhood of us humans, in contrast to the rapid maturing of the animals, both that the mind might develop and that the social experience of the race might be passed on. From the intellectual blankness of the hour of birth to the full vigor of maturity this mental life is continuous. It is a process of growth, in which adolescence but marks a rapid development and change of outlook that mean the mental "coming of age." It must not be forgotten, however, that we speak in this chapter of normal adolescence, of average capacity, and do not draw an exact picture of any individual. For mental life ranges all the way from the few geniuses down through the average mass to the decreasing number of morons and imbeciles.

I. THE THINKING PROCESS

1. How We Acquire Ideas. Without an outside world with which to form a comparison and a contrast, we could not be aware even of ourselves. The outside world enters our consciousness by means of the sensory nerves of ear, eye,

nose, touch, and so forth. We call these experiences *sensations*. A sensation that gains a place in our attention sets up a mental picture more or less exact, which we call a *percept*. For example, through my eye I get an exact picture of a particular apple. When the sensation is over, however, that is, when I close my eye, or divert its attention, the picture remains, with lines less definite, a generalized sort of picture. This is an *idea*. Read or hear the word "apple," and it is the idea that comes to mind, not the precise picture. These further tend to form associative groups with other ideas having points of similarity. So the ideas of pear, peach, apple, and so forth, form the general *concept* "fruit." When I saw my first grape-fruit, I at once by association recognized its points of essential similarity to objects of the same sort and called it "fruit," and it was welcomed to an abiding place in my mind. But had there been no existing group awaiting it, or were there not this associative tendency, the idea might easily have been lost. How disastrous when the mind is furnished largely with groups of evil thoughts, so that when a worthy idea enters it, it finds no similar group to welcome it, and so fails to take up its abode! For example, a sensual mind that has long wallowed in foul thoughts will be quick to detect a lewd meaning in spoken word or life situation, but will lose those things that are pure, lovely, and of good report. One such recently quoted a favorite Bible saying, but with a leer on his face that indicated that he had found a possible

vulgar meaning. How important to build up groups of wholesome ideas! As soon, then, as new sensations claim the field of attention, these former ideas recede into the *memory,* whence they may be recalled and used again, or they sink farther back into the subconscious, where they may continue, unrecognized, to influence life. Had Jesus this in mind when he said that some day we must give account of every idle word?

2. **The Process of Analysis.** Further mental activity involves selecting ideas and discriminating between them, passing judgment on them as to their relative value. This, for example, is better, more useful, more beautiful than that. Ideas must also be coordinated, placed in their right relation to each other. Even a child can learn to coordinate the ideas of seed, tree, fruit, but many relationships demand the effort of mature thought. To these latter belong many of our religious ideas, which fact further explains religion as an adolescent experience. The idea of a Saviour, for example, is quite unintelligible without relating it to the idea of sin. And the old Hebrew idea of sacrifice may easily continue to be almost meaningless for want of knowledge of those phases of ancient pastoral life out of which it came. Ideas again must be classified and generalized. The child calls a whale a fish, which is a general term applied to many similar living creatures, because it is like other fish in the most obvious points of comparison. But a mature person does better at classification, sees

the hidden but essential points of likeness, and calls it a mammal, along with cows and elephants and men.

Finally these ideas are subject to expansion through the process of *imagination,* whether the free flights of childhood or the constructive efforts of the scientist. Known facts or elements of experience are brought together and produce in the fertile soil of the mind something never yet experienced. So Columbus constructed the picture of a round earth. The child, however, makes fantastic combinations, unhampered by the considerations of reason or judgment. Thus the healthy mind is the scene of great activity, as the world of thought enlarges, and this becomes fully possible now with the arrival of adolescence and its more complete physical equipment for thought life.

3. **The Social Contribution to Thinking.** Fortunately no individual is left to work out his thinking all alone. We need not to acquire all our own ideas by first-hand experience. Our fellow men, both our contemporaries and those of the past, have had their experiences, have acquired their ideas, have formed their associations of ideas, and have developed their standards of judgment, and these become available to us through the medium of language, whether spoken or written. So the mental life is enriched. For this we go to school, we attend church, we read, we travel. Society furnishes us our food for thought in all things social, industrial, domestic, scientific, esthetic, philosophical, and religious.

Who could ever formulate a law of gravity, a factory system, an ethical code, or a doctrine of the Trinity unaided? The pioneer, the original thinker, is quite the exception. No one in the isolated group of primitive savages had any more ideas than the rest, so there was no expanding thought life, only monotonous stagnation. But the materials for thought and the stimulus to thinking are available in our civilization on every hand. In childhood we acquire the tools for thought—language, reading, elementary experience, some concepts and laws. Adolescence is the time when the heir may enter into his vast estate of human experience.

4. **Thinking and Behavior.** Of course no two minds are equally capable of grasping the inheritance. But even given two minds of equal native capacity, the one will operate better that is the richer in ideas, vivid and available. Wide experience leads to valid associations of these ideas and to independence of thinking. This is the business of our system of education. And finally there must be some standards by means of which to arrive at sound judgments, measuring-rods by which new ideas or situations are promptly evaluated. These are our moral codes, our *principles,* and for the most part they are produced for us out of the long experience of the race. Frank is offered a job, attractive to every outward appearance. But he strips away the superficial elements and finds that fundamentally the proposal is dishonest, and he refuses to accept. He will not violate his code. These stand-

ards of judgment, together with the ability to feel and to will, produce right behavior. Let the student of religion grasp the significance of many right and available religious ideas, breadth of actual religious experience, and sound and adequate religious standards, and he will have the key to most of his religious instruction. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he."

II. THE MIND OF THE ADOLESCENT

1. Attaining Maturity. Beginning at puberty, as we have seen, the brain-cells multiply rapidly, the sensory and motor areas mature, and the associative area increases. The age of fourteen usually marks the end of the growth of intelligence in the strictly psychological sense, that is "the ability to adapt to relatively new situations" (Pintner). Age but accumulates more facts, enters into more experience, and acquires more judgment and skill. But age has no more intellectual capacity than has middle adolescence. We should not wonder at the occasional brilliant intellectual production of one who seems a mere youth.

2. Reason. The attempt to arrive at conclusions is not new with adolescence, but the power is now vastly enlarged. Instead of an occasional flash of insight or a sporadic exercise of the power of reason, we may now expect increasingly the power of sustained reasoning, of vigorous debate, of the search for all relevant facts, and for the forming of adequate conclusions. We

should rely more and more upon this power in the instruction and discipline of young people. If the mind be alert, the new power is fascinating, and we need not be annoyed if Robert tries to turn every remark into an argument, and even plays "devil's advocate" for the sake of a debate. Formal debating will find plenty of followers among the mentally active in both high school and college, whose interest will be not so much defending a position out of personal conviction, but rather the free exercise of intellectual powers, the matching of wits, the mastery of presentation. For this either side of almost any question will do. All such mental activity is the high road to intellectual independence, and our great regret should be when we find young people too indolent to travel it. Even though it may lead to apparent revolt, this were better than mental stagnation. Adolescent reason needs to be exercised, disciplined, and brought under control of self, rather than under that of others, as was inevitable in childhood.

3. **Imagination.** This power to bring ideas into new combinations does not belong exclusively to any particular period of life, though it changes its character as we go on. The child, for example, may have a vivid imagination, but it has largely to do with things of sense and of experience. There may be for him giants and fairies, but these are just the human beings of his experience magnified or diminished, as the case may be. On the other hand, day-dreaming, so familiar a characteristic of adolescence, scarcely knows any

limits in any direction. The young person may bring together the known facts and experiences of his life in aimless combination as his whim may decide, and the imaginings may be harmless or utterly evil. Or he may vigorously project himself into new fields or far into the future. Experience of life has not yet put the damper on such mental activity, so the resulting combinations may at times seem fantastic. Yet out of such dreaming may come poetry, discovery, invention. Out of it may arise faith, hope, aspiration, and spiritual vision. "Your young men shall dream dreams."

4. **Judgment.** There may be now a power to evaluate. The authority and tradition that satisfied childhood slacken their hold, and there is a tendency to independence of judgment, provided, of course, that there is any real thinking done at all. But while a few may be even radical in their judgments, a surprising number of young people never exercise this important capacity to any noticeable degree. To all, however, there comes an increase of sense of discrimination, of sight, sound, touch, and taste, and these constitute the physical basis for the new power of judgment. Adolescence may begin with cocksureness and superficiality, but these should gradually give way to soundness of judgment based on experience and principle, for this power is essential to strength and independence of character. Different kinds of special judgment will be cultivated during these years, according to vocation and interest. Esthetic judgment for the artist,

economic values for the business man, personality values for the leaders of men. For every youth, however, there is need of the development, as far as may be possible, of the power of moral discernment.

5. **Interest.** Another characteristic of adolescent intellectual life is a new power of attention, which, coupled with native capacities, temperament, opportunity, and previous experience, produces the special interests of this period of life. These range from hobbies which appear in the earlier years, such as stamp-collecting, photography, or radio, to those mastering interests that shape the life work. The latter often are revealed when the student selects a field of specialization in college. Some are social, some mechanical, some scientific, some religious. The range is great and includes unfortunately some unworthy interests. But for the others gradually the horizons widen, till at length the youth may become capable of a genuine world vision in matters of import. Religion often fails to become an interest of young people, not because they are irreligious or lacking in spiritual capacity, but because it has not been presented to them in a way to command their attention. Attendance at summer camps, at young people's conferences, and at the Student Volunteer Conventions reveals the fact that religion may be a vital interest of youth.

6. **Mental Activity Versus Stagnation.** In thus considering some of the larger aspects of the intellectual life of adolescence, we need to remind

ourselves that limited native mental capacities will debar many from their full realization. It is also depressing to consider the number of young persons who through intellectual stagnation allow their fine powers to atrophy. Many a college professor will tell of the difficulty of arousing his students to active and independent thinking. To earn a bare passing grade, to read only the minimum required amount, and to compile quotations instead of expressing personal thought in an essay, these easily satisfy many. On such students as these, indeed, the college is wasting its time and its resources. Outside of college the vast majority think only in the most narrow fields of self-interest, and otherwise act like sheep, blindly following any strong leader, or swayed by whim or passion. The task of the religious educator is thus made far more difficult, for right living demands also right thinking.

III. INTELLECTUAL LIFE OF EACH PERIOD OF ADOLESCENCE

1. Early Adolescence (12-14, junior high school). Reasoning at this age, through the exercise of the newly acquired power, is likely to be active, but rather crude. Experience has not yet developed the power of discrimination between the essential and the casual, so that conclusions are not reliable. Tommy may also pursue an eager quest for information, facts, statistics, events, and details, not perhaps the orderly acquiring of learning which his teacher

desires, but a more indiscriminate amassing of a medley of items. His power of memory is now active and furnishes him much food for thought. The collecting tendency may add to his interests. With the new basis for independence, his actions tend to become less mere matters of habit and of docile submission to the leadership of others, and may take on more self-direction and control. Consequently this may be a critical time in the relation of parent and son or daughter, specially if the former has been domineering in matters of opinion, or the latter shows independence of will, unless the parent can learn gradually to relax the strong hold and instead to develop more and more the comradeship of equals.

The teaching values of these points must not be overlooked. For the first time now we may hope to get some results out of class discussion, since reason may be appealed to. Memory, too, may be stored with good things. In religious instruction this is a wise time to return to the study of the life of Jesus, not alone to discover in him the hero that he was, but also to begin to understand and appreciate the meaning and value of his teachings. Not all the conclusions of class discussion will be valid and adequate, but it is a great thing if boys and girls can be led to form some independent opinions concerning Jesus and attitudes toward him.

2. **Middle Adolescence** (15-17, senior high school). By this time full mental capacity has been practically attained. The youth will out-

judge his father in the accuracy of number, size, and distance, for this ability is at its peak. The day-dreams of this period reveal an active imagination, more definite and logical in its working, more social in its outlook. And these may be of great value, for they are likely to be forward-looking, dreams of ambition, of life-work, of home-making. Later disillusioned years may look back and smile when recalling some of these youthful musings, yet these very dreams may have permanent worth in setting the ideals of a lifetime.

Ability to reason is now no longer a novelty, but its increase brings many an added delight in its exercise, in debate and argument. The fine work done in some of our best high schools, where capacity is really drawn out, reveals the possibility of intellectual control in boys and girls from sixteen years and on. At this age, too, may take place those sudden intellectual awakenings in different fields which correspond to religious conversion and which leave all subsequent thinking on a new and higher level. Matters of knowledge which seemed remote and isolated, suddenly flash together in creative relationship, and new vistas for exploration are opened up. This, to be sure, is the happy experience of only the brighter minority of young people. It should, however, be anticipated always as a possibility in any group of young people and should be at once recognized and encouraged when it appears.

In discussion with this group, childish answers

will no longer do, dogmatic assertions unsupported by reason, based simply on the doubtful authority of maturity, and demanding submissive acquiescence. For your adolescent may be thinking for himself, and ready to question such authority. Indeed his questioning will in a few instances have passed into doubting and even cynicism. Fear to answer honest questions or lack of candor will soon be discovered and much harm will likely follow. Nowhere can this be more serious than in the field of religion where loss of confidence in the instructor may involve loss of faith in the matter taught as well. Fear to face the acknowledged findings of science in the interest of defending some part of the Bible, unwillingness to see the limitations of one's own denomination lest criticism hurt it, refusal to permit the questioning of the validity of some item of customary morality for fear the whole order will collapse—such things turn honest and intelligent young people away and lose them to the cause of religion. This, of course, becomes increasingly serious with the last period of adolescence.

It should be borne in mind that at this very age, many will have left or will be leaving school and will be going to work. This will mean for a very large proportion of them that there will be little further challenge to real thinking left in life. Monotonously feeding a machine all day, and afterward having no mental stimulus but the movie, the trashy magazine, or the tabloid newspaper, they cease to think indepen-

dently. Much of the curriculum material of religious education seems to overlook this fact and to demand thinking beyond the stage of their development. Many of them, indeed, will have to leave much of their religious thinking to be done by others. The power of the church of Rome rests very much on the recognition of this fact.

3. **Later Adolescence** (18-24, college years). It is more difficult adequately to describe the intellectual characteristics of this period, for by this time the spread in mental age, due to differences of native capacity, has reached its maximum. Also the effects of the wide differences of educational and cultural opportunity presented by the various school environments in which these young people have grown up, are very evident. It becomes harder to determine what is typical. The intellectual possibilities of the age lie above the average of attainment, and these we shall keep more in mind.

Now begins the period of specialization for those whose intellectual life has not suffered stagnation. Ranging widely in different fields may also continue, but increasingly the dominant interests assert themselves, claiming a larger share of time and effort. Economic and vocational demands urge this specialization, often to the loss of broader intellectual horizons. Moreover the development of dominant interests is almost sure to mean the neglect and ultimate loss of other worth-while native capacities, as when Darwin, by his own testimony, so con-

centrated on his science that he lost a youthful capacity to enjoy poetry. Such a selection among one's powers and possibilities should not lightly be made. Thinking, which becomes the purposive means to a desired end rather than an end in itself as formerly, becomes possible, for reasoning and the powers of adequate evaluation are now coming to maturity. And with college age should come the ability to grasp the relations of things, not merely in a narrow circle, but in the totality of reality. So late adolescence reacts against the emotional dominance of the middle period and shapes life more by reason.

IV. ADOLESCENT DOUBTS

This leads us to consider the matter of so-called adolescent doubts. These might better be called adolescent questionings, to be rid of the sinister implications of the word "doubt." For actual settled doubting, the negative outcome of our thinking, is the experience of a relatively small number. It is more natural for man to believe. With the transition of authority from childhood's docile acquiescence to the self-directed reasoning of maturity, questions as to cause, purpose, and value are bound to arise, if we think at all. And the youth whose more privileged social environment has brought opportunities for education and culture will begin to question earlier than his less-favored neighbor, even in middle adolescence, as was revealed by a recent investigation. On the one hand those who drop

school early, whose work all day demands no independent thought, who read little if any, raise very few questionings. They tend to become credulous, timid, and static in mental life, and stubbornly naive in their religious thinking.

The more wide-spread questioning on the part of the youth of today is the logical outcome of our expanding public education. All such questioning, however, is the royal road to truth and independence. It belongs to the pioneer in quest of reality. Some, to be sure, with a spirit of deviltry, will delight to gain the attention of others by being radical, boldly trying out their powers to the limit, putting a question-mark after every doctrine and scoffing at every conviction that is the least bit old. But others will be making a real search after truth, in which the questioning is inevitable and incidental. The experience will be wholesome, if they do not become alarmed and stop half-way in the quest. Many, however, will become timid at the first question raised and will find refuge in refusing to think independently at all. One such sweet girl, for example, expressed utter horror at the heresy of asking the question, "Is there a God?" She will never be troubled with doubt, but also she will always have to be spoon-fed so far as her religious thinking is concerned. And much of the questioning is religious, concerning such matters as God, immortality, prayer, the Bible, and the church. Young people are entitled to ask their church for help with these questions. Is the church itself afraid?

The asking of the first question that fails to find a ready answer often seems to stagger the faith of a young person. And when one question is found to involve another and yet another, the experience is terrifying. The only real way out is to keep on and think it through, or better yet to live it through till conviction has a solid basis in experience. Prayer right here counts for much. Questioning of religious things by young people is rather common, but settled religious doubt or skepticism is not at all common. As for atheism, relatively few young people know enough to be genuinely atheistic. Boasted skepticism is often only a blind to hide an evil life, a means of avoiding the necessity of facing squarely the moral demands of God. The religious teacher, who has himself thought his way through some of these problems, and who does not dogmatically demand that all follow his exact trail, but who sympathetically leaves initiative to the young thinker, will be of great value.

Before we leave the subject of this chapter, we should notice how much of the world's great achievement has been accomplished by young people in the late years of adolescence. In discovery, invention, literature, art—in fact, in every line of creative thinking, these have made astonishing contribution. And they will again. Let the religious educator, therefore, present boldly a large vision and a great challenge, and do it now. "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

For Discussion and Observation

1. How is intelligence related to character? Try to be discriminating in your answer.

2. On the basis of the changing intellectual life of the three periods of adolescence, what corresponding changes should be made in the methods of teaching these ages in the church school?

3. Do you know a real adolescent doubter? A questioner? What is the difference? Is it wrong to question? How shall we help a questioner? A doubter? (See John 7: 17.)

4. So-called country "Rubes" used to be the butt of many jokes because of their seeming stupidity in contrast to city dwellers. There was no essential difference in mental capacity. What difference was there? Why has that difference so largely disappeared?

5. What is the law of "apperception"? Illustrate concretely how you would use it in teaching the incident of the Triumphal Entry to a class of middle adolescents.

6. How may the interests of any stage of adolescence be used for character-forming ends? How may dormant religious interest be aroused?

7. Has the church any duty in stimulating the intellectual life of those adolescents who quit school to go to work? Why? What specifically can be done about it?

8. Illustrate selfish and unselfish use of the powers of the intellect. What makes the latter seem desirable to young people?

9. Illustrate the principle of the unconscious absorption of attitudes.

Bibliography

Dewey, J.: "How We Think." Heath, 1910.

Robinson, J. H.: "The Mind in the Making." Harper, 1921.

Harper, W. A.: "Youth and Truth." Century, 1927.

Tracy, F.: "Psychology of Adolescence." Macmillan, 1922.

CHAPTER VIII

THE AGE OF DECISION

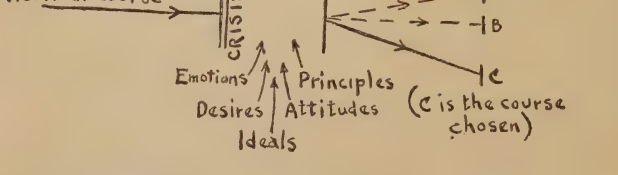
Life's progress is marked by decisions reached and the actions that follow. These range all the way from the trivial decisions of almost continuous occurrence, which necktie to wear or which bread to eat, white or brown, to those momentous decisions which affect the whole course of life. Some seem almost, if not quite, devoid of moral quality, while in others the moral aspect is so prominent that we describe one of the possible courses of action as "temptation." Furthermore the action that follows some decisions gradually develops into habit, with diminishing occasion for fresh decision as the situation recurs. This necessity for making decisions belongs to every stage of life, but in adolescence the individual not only attains the power of independent decision, but usually faces the necessity of settling some of the most vital issues of life. Hence we call this preeminently the age of decision.

I. MAKING DECISIONS

When in a baseball-game a crisis occurs and victory depends on a single quick play, the process of deciding where to throw the ball is so condensed in the mind of the player receiving it that the action seems almost instinctive. Yet

the essential elements of decision have all been present. Again a youth may debate most of the way through college as to his life-work before reaching a conclusion. The time involved in a decision is not an essential element.

1. **How Decision Is Reached.** Life usually tends to follow the course laid out by habit, where there is a minimum of mental or physical effort. But suddenly a situation may arise disturbing that even course and suggesting or even compelling other possible lines of action. It may be a chance meeting, a business opportunity, a flat tire, or an illness. It is a crisis of greater or lesser import. We pause, while imagination pushes forward, exploring along each line in turn, and presenting dramatically to the mind the outcome of each. We weigh, evaluate, and compare these; we eliminate all but one of them. Then we pursue life again along the remaining chosen course. Such is decision.



To illustrate: John is a junior in college. For three years he has toiled habitually toward his degree, without debating about his goal. One morning the mail brings him an offer of an at-

tractive business position, if he will take it at once. A crisis situation confronts him. He must think and decide before responding. While he pauses, imagination projects him forward a year, two years, ten years, along each course. He sees himself at once financially independent, soon in a responsible position, and very soon setting up a comfortable home, if he should accept the offer. If he should refuse, he sees further years of cramped finances, but ultimately his coveted degree and an honorable position in a congenial profession. As he seeks to evaluate the two pictures, his tastes, his ideals, his life purposes, his own scale of values, in fact his whole personality, are brought to bear. Then the decision is made. The business offer is dismissed, and he resumes his habitual road toward the degree. Had the business opening included an immoral condition along with the attractive features, we should call it "temptation." Had it involved the loyalties, ideals, and values of his religious life, then the type and quality of his religion might well have been the decisive factor.

2. The Elements of Decision

(1) *Reason.* It is the function of reason here to weigh and evaluate the matters dramatically pictured by the imagination. Practise games have presented to the good ball-player most of the possible situations of the game, and he has reasoned them through in advance. Moreover ideals, principles, desires play almost no part, so the decision where to throw the ball is almost instantaneous. But as John contemplates his busi-

ness opportunity, he converses with himself, taking first one side, then the other, of the matter. Sometimes when we say that we are seeking counsel in such deliberation, all we are really seeking is some one to maintain one side of this argument, while we work the matter through. Or if the matter be of a religious nature and the experience sufficiently vivid, it seems actually as if we had conversed with God himself, and we are likely so to represent it, if we try to tell some one else about it. It should be obvious that in this reasoning process a well-stored and experienced mind ought to be able to grasp relationships more adequately, and so should reach soundest judgments.

(2) *Emotion.* Each experience of the imagination in the case will be accompanied by feeling, and this feeling will often gain the mastery and compel the response. Or there may be conflicting emotions that will cause wavering. Or again, feeling may oppose or may strengthen reason. John may experience a wave of repulsive feeling when he contemplates the men with whom he must associate, if he accepts the business offer, and if this be strong enough, it will determine the outcome, whether or not in line with reason.

(3) *Will.* The will is not, of course, a separate compartment of the mind, for the mind is a unity. It is rather the manner in which the mind acts when the proper stage of deliberation has been reached. So the mind must be trained for all its functions, including this final one of

putting away with determination all possible courses but one, and of following strongly that one course. Young people should be helped to overcome two kinds of weakness, first, the failure to reach any decision when all the facts are in hand, and then to open up a question and deliberate on it again after a decision has been reached. Better far to make a mistake and to stick by it! John must decide concerning his opportunity, and once he has so decided to stay in school, he must no longer dream of the salary he has refused and regret his choice. The best way to cultivate the will is by willing.

(4) *The Holy Spirit.* Granting that God operates in human lives by his Spirit, it lies wholly beyond psychology to analyze the part he plays in forming decisions. For this reason a purely mechanistic psychology must deny such activity on his part. Christian faith, however, is built on the assumption that God has such relations with men. We cannot see him. We cannot hear him. Yet many devout persons are satisfied that they could never have had the wisdom or the courage to reach certain decisions without his aid. So strong is this confidence that, without psychological analysis of the matter, Paul says, "It is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me," while Tennyson says,

> Our wills are ours, we know not how,
> Our wills are ours to make them Thine.

We venture to affirm that the Spirit of God operates, not as a separate factor, a something

to be brought in after man has done his part, but rather in and through the whole decisive process, so that Paul is wonderfully true! This means the necessity of enlightenment as to what he would do in our lives, and of cooperation with that purpose when it becomes known to us. Hence the need of prayer.

Adolescence is the time for the fuller development of each of these elements of decision, reason, emotion, and will, and, as we shall see, it is the time for a more significant relationship with the divine Helper. This is of vital consequence in character-formation. Religious education is concerned with the whole process.

II. LIFE'S GREAT DECISIONS

1. Decision as Adjustment to Life's Conditions. All of the decisions we make, whether greater or lesser, may be thought of as adjustment to life's conditions. The little child gets many a bump and knock while experimenting with the new world in which he finds himself, and he continues to decide on new experiments till he finds comfortable adjustment. His older brother on his part is habitually a white-bread-eater, till one day he suffers a severe digestive upset. Then he decides to eat brown bread only, with happy consequences. He has adjusted himself to a health condition. So in the lesser things we may make decision after decision till we find a satisfactory adjustment. But in the major things of life, many of which normally are settled during

adolescence, decisions are less easily recast, and in them maladjustment spells unhappiness, inefficiency, loss, and even tragedy. Let the religious educator, therefore, bend every effort to help young people make these decisions with great care. The three that are the greatest for most persons, we shall name:

2. **Religion.** In our discussion of this subject we shall view it from its human side only, and without theological reference, important as this is, thinking of it rather as a decision experience. Other phases of religion appear in Chapter X.

(1) *Meaning of the Experience.* In each life the personality tends to become integrated around a "value-center," the "hot-spot" of consciousness. All contacts and relationships of life are estimated in terms of the one thing of highest value. So a scientist may value home, money, friendships as they may aid his pursuit of his one goal, his scientific research. The real business man values recreation because it makes him more fit for his business, while the "sport" values his business because it gives him the means for the pursuit of his recreation. The process of integration round a center may be very gradual, and, while it may begin early, childhood furnishes too little experience for it to be completed till later. Instead a child, like a butterfly, flits from one interest or center to another. A well-centered life, able to say with Paul, "This one thing I do," is the happy and efficient life. A poorly centered life, shifting back and forth from one value to another, will be

restless and inefficient. That life will be essentially good whose value-center is good, while the life whose value-center is bad will be evil. The accompanying figure may help to make this clearer:

The religious man is one whose life centers round a religious value, and for the Christian that center is Christ. Jesus said, "Seek ye first his kingdom and his righteousness," that is, make these the center of your life, while Paul put it, "For me to live is Christ." Religious decision may then be thought of as the choosing of a religious value-center for the whole life. Christian decision means "that in all things he may have the preeminence."

(2) *Types of Religious Decision.* In times past, when religious decision was spoken of, only "conversion," the radical turning about of one's life, was considered, such experiences as those of Paul, of Augustine, or of Begbie's *Twice Born Men.* Prior to conversion, each person was said to be "depraved," and many certainly were. But there are so many genuine Christian lives that have known no such experience, which, nevertheless, had beginning in a definite act of

decision, such lives as Timothy's and those of countless second and third generation Christians, that we must broaden our discussion to include them also. We can speak here only in generalizations, since every such experience is essentially individual.

a. *Gradual.* Only gradually does the child recognize the values of life. For the little child things are bad that bring pain and punishment. Good things bring the reverse. Later on things are good or bad according as the ones to whom dominant loyalty is given—normally, mother and father—declare them to be. But as experience enlarges and the child adds observations of his own, there may begin the process, largely unconscious, of unifying life around one value-center. In a wholesomely religious environment, in which home and church and school have contributed a common attitude, he may acquire a religious basis for his evaluations, without ever having integrated his life around any other center. The time comes, however, when to be of worth this religious life must become his own, other possible life centers must be consciously abandoned, and this can scarcely happen intelligently before early adolescence. To make this decision experience real there is need that the thoughtless, habitual drift of childhood be interrupted by the realization that life may have a supreme central value and that Jesus Christ must be that value, need that the young person arrive at his own choice and make his own commitment. So the gradual unfolding becomes in the end a de-

cision process, and few would deny that this is a genuine and normal mode of entry into the Christian life.

b. *Climactic.* With some temperaments, however, though the environment has been just as favorable for producing a well-centered life, the process of integration seems delayed. There are many such young people in our churches and our homes. Through self-respect or loyalty to home and its ideals, they live a commendable life on the whole. They do not seem to care to join the church, or if they do join, it may be because others are so doing. They acquiesce in the teachings of Jesus, but lack any personal attachment to him. We are puzzled and troubled about them. The various elements of character, such as habits, attitudes, ideals, and principles, seem good enough, but they remain unrelated, uncentered, inadequately motivated, perhaps even to middle adolescence or beyond. But at last, under a great stimulus, with suddenness and with a marked emotional upheaval, these factors seem to rush together round a common value-center, which is seen to be Jesus Christ. Challenged by this realization, the young person makes his decision and commits his life, with great joy and satisfaction, and with all the ardor of an enthralling affection he attaches himself to Jesus and his way. Without any previous notably evil life, the experience has been as marked and climactic as any conversion. Now if a Decision Day technique has any value, it would seem to be in presenting an adequate stimulus for just such an

integrating experience as this. It needs, however, to be handled with great caution and good judgment, lest it abuse the more gradual experience, in which the marked emotional upheaval should not take place.

c. *Conversion.* True conversion takes place only in a life that has first become definitely integrated around a bad value-center. Challenged with the appeal of a good center, the person makes a shift of the whole personality from the old one to the new. This is done suddenly, and the preparation for it may have been brief or prolonged. An older type of theology considered all children as utterly depraved and held that this was the only religious experience that could be genuine. Present-day religious education holds that ideally this experience should be the exception, and that in any case it should be relatively rare before late adolescence.

Certain steps in the conversion may be recognized, and while they may be expressed in language of their own, they will be seen to be the familiar steps of any decision. (a) First "*conviction.*" The person's habitual evil life is challenged by a realization of its unworthiness. The possibility of a different, more worthy value-center is recognized. (b) *Conflict and resistance.* The imagination goes forward along two possible courses of life, presented by the conflicting values. The conflict is always between a seeming good and a real good. Only thus is there conflict. No man ever is a drunkard, for example, for the sake of the headaches, the loss of social standing,

or the troubled home. He drinks to satisfy a physical craving, or for sociability, or to drown out his anxieties. And these seem good. He is loath to give them up. But conscience challenges his ideals; memory of a good home may stir his affections; better judgment pronounces in favor of the upright life. So the conflicting courses are evaluated and the better way is resisted. Emotions clash. There is unrest, even torture, of soul. (c) *Surrender.* The evil course is abandoned and the better accepted; the shift is made from a bad value-center to a good one. This final step is always sudden, whether the conflict has been long or short. (d) *Peace.* The tension of the conflict of emotions and ideals is over, and the complete integration of personality brings a deep sense of peace and power. In some cases the experience is so profound that even physical appetites lose their hold, indeed they may even turn to loathing, though this is by no means always the case.

The value of the revivalist technique that presents a challenge, stirs the better emotions, aids in right evaluations, and registers the decision, cannot be denied for cases of evil life. And it is a mistake, in the pursuit of the other ideal, to forget that there is recurrent need of its use, particularly in later adolescence. For the climactic type of experience its use is questionable, while for the unfolding life it is an utter mistake.

Whatever the form of religious decision, it should normally be an adolescent experience, yet with from one-third to two-thirds of the young

people of this generation in home and school environment untouched by church life and indifferent to religion, it should be evident that religious education's twofold task must be to furnish opportunity for religious nurture, and at the proper time and in the proper manner to present an adequate challenge to independent religious living, a challenge to personal commitment to Jesus Christ. It is a staggering responsibility!

3. **Life Companion.** Adolescence being the period of preparation for mating and parenthood, it is normal that the choice of a life companion should in many cases be made before its end. Many factors enter to bring about the first awareness of love for the loved one, which constitutes the "crisis" in this experience. Primitive impulse, the desire for a mate, is a powerful and sometimes a blinding incentive, so that other considerations may have little bearing, and hasty and unwise marriages often result. The "soft" emotion of love may be enjoyed for its own sake, with little regard for the worthiness of the object of that love. Indeed it is probably a thing not to be regretted that a normal young person is likely to have several such affairs of the heart before the one that issues in marriage, for something more substantial than this first outburst of affection is needed for true marriage and home-making. Mere proximity, the constant meeting of Henry and Emma, because they live in the same block or "clerk" in the same store, sometimes kindles the spark. But far too few young people are prepared by

adequate instruction to let reason play its proper part in the decision "to wed or not to wed," and wisely to evaluate the many considerations involved. There is probably a place for a glorious abandon of feeling, once the decision has been reached, but the fact remains that far too many merely "fall" in love. The time for the wise and trusted counselor to help to bring about a desirable decision in this vital matter is before the love crisis has been confronted.

Let that counselor begin by helping the young person to cultivate wholesome attitudes toward marriage, if possible to offset the flippant and distorted attitudes that get so much publicity today. For example, a young woman, discussing a friend who was about to marry a worthless fellow, recently said: "Oh, yes, she knows all about him. But he is a swell dancer, and she just loves to pal around with him and have a good time. So she has decided to marry him. She expects to keep on teaching school (!) to support herself." "But," said a hearer, "what will that amount to twenty years from now?" "Oh," she exclaimed, "they don't expect it to last that long. None of the young people expect it to any more." What is wrong with this picture? What need there is to help to determine what constitutes fitness for life-long companionship, for mutual counsel, for parenthood, what physical conditions, what traits of character, of training, of personality, of intelligence! Jack and Betty may have much in common, yet may both be of high-strung nervous temperament.

The prospect is that in a difficult situation both may go to pieces, and that at all times each will develop rather than offset the other's weakness. The outlook for a happy marriage is not promising. Or Mary may be the sweetest creature that ever breathed (as she usually is!), but she may be utterly unfit by training and temperament to cope with the limiting conditions of William's probable professional income.

Let the young people see the importance of a real community of interests and of ideals, even where dispositions are different but mutually complementary. Let them realize that the happiest marriages rarely involve a wide difference of social background, or of race, or of creed. If we tell these things to Willard after Rebecca has engaged all his thoughts, he will see every virtue and every grace in his queen, even though she may not possess them. But tell him early enough, and his deeper friendships are more likely to be formed only among the more desirable ones. And it is just as vital for Rebecca to know how to answer her Willard!

For very many, marriage is a late adolescent matter, growing out of adolescent desire and experience. The social, economic, and educational conditions of our modern culture, however, tend to postpone it more and more, and thus there is artificially set up an increased demand for adolescent idealism and self-control. Students of our public and social life view this situation with grave concern. Can our rising generation stand the moral strain that our civilization puts

upon them? Religious education cannot avoid the challenge to try to furnish an answer. The doctrine of "companionate marriage" is a misguided and dangerous attempt to meet this situation. It proposes that young people enter into the married state legally and enjoy the marriage relationship even before they are economically ready to undertake the responsibility for homemaking. It is assumed that they will have full knowledge of how to remain childless, and even that they may postpone setting up any sort of housekeeping. If the arrangement should cease to be mutually agreeable, it may be easily abandoned. The proposal makes marriage too trivial. Its so-called "self-expression" becomes too easily mere physical indulgence. It repudiates parenthood, which is the very basis of marriage. And it easily runs away from those mutual social obligations that make for real worth of character. It is a false and corrupting teaching.

4. **Life-work.** There are so many round pegs in square holes that it would seem that in such cases either no decision at all concerning life-work has been made, or that the decision has been made unwisely. But in every case there has been a decision. Even when Jim quits school to get a "job," or when Mildred goes to work for $15 a week, instead of for $12, a choice has been made, and on this may rest a whole future. And this life decision belongs to adolescence. The pre-adolescent child may dream of his future, but he is not compelled to make a final decision. At the other end, it is only the eco-

nomic parasite, or the person whose professional training causes delay, who has not become a producer long before adolescence is over. And even in the latter of these cases, the delay is the result of a life-work decision. The importance of this may be seen when we contemplate the outcome of unwise choice, the unhappiness and unrest that may harass the rest of life, sometimes dependence and broken homes, and in extreme cases even crime and suicide.

Under normal circumstances the final decision of this question is not an emergency matter. Rather the deliberation may extend over a long time, and may involve many earlier elimination decisions. And there are many elements in this deliberation. If earlier experience has been rich and varied enough, there will be some indications as to native capacities, such as interests, tastes, and embryo skills, and these will at once open or close many doors. Personality traits need also to be considered, such as assurance, interest in detail, speed of decision, and many others. These will determine certain large areas in which choice may wisely be made—the executive, the salesman, the scientist, the politician, the mechanic, or the farmer. Considering the work itself, certain questions will be asked: First of all, is its basis ethically sound? What are its rewards, social, financial, intellectual, spiritual? What leisure time will it assure for legitimate recreation, or for worthy and attractive avocations? Health, environment, and opportunities for training may eliminate some possible vocations, while

the inner urges of sex, idealism, and religion may suggest others.

This whole matter is far too large and significant to be dismissed in these brief available paragraphs. But all friends and counselors of young people must see the vital importance that attaches to vocational guidance and self-analysis, and must be thoroughly prepared to give aid in this destiny-determining decision.

For Discussion and Observation

1. Is it wrong to be tempted? Wherein lies the wrong? Just what do we mean by *temptation?* Was Jesus really tempted?

2. Just what should we ask young people to do on Decision Day? Be specific with your answer. Avoid general expressions such as "to follow Christ," "to give their hearts to God."

3. Cite, if possible, examples of each type of religious decision. Is one better than another in producing genuine Christian life? Why should we seek preferably the process of gradual development, coupled with real decision?

4. Has the church any duty toward its young people in helping them to right decision regarding life-work? What can be done? What steps can you take at once in your church?

5. What are the relative parts played by head and heart in the experience of courtship? Can the church help young people in this decision? How?

6. Cite examples of men who make decisions on the basis of "cold reason." On the basis of

feeling. What is the relative importance of each in decision-making?

7. Can you cite a case in which a major life decision was made before adolescence? Why so few? Give psychological reasons for your answer.

8. Analyze the revivalist's method of securing a religious decision. What points of strength? Of weakness?

Bibliography

Josey, C. C.: "Psychology of Religion." Macmillan, 1927.

Richardson, N. E.: "The Religious Education of Adolescents." Abingdon, 1913.

Gage, A. H.: "The Evangelism of Youth." Judson Press, 1922.

Moxcey, M. E.: "Finding My Place." Abingdon, 1927.

Groves, E. R.: "Wholesome Marriage." Houghton, 1927.

Clark, Elmer T.: "The Psychology of Religious Awakening." Macmillan, 1929.

Christian Quest Materials. International Council of Religious Education, 1927.

CHAPTER IX

THE ADOLESCENT AND SOCIETY

The problem of how to live together amicably, efficiently, and wholesomely, so that each may achieve the highest degree of self-realization, while making large contribution to the common good, is one of the major human problems. Such ideal living should be the practical outcome of the Christian life and is one of its chief goals. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" implies an obligation first to attain self-culture and development, as a norm by which to gauge one's duty to his neighbor. Adolescence should mean the transition from the narrower egoism of childhood to this fully socialized condition.

I. THE PLACE OF THE ADOLESCENT IN SOCIETY

1. Youth in Primitive Society. Contrast, however, the simplicity of the social and religious life of youth in primitive society with the complexity of adolescent life in present-day America. In the former there was one dominant group, the tribe, one environment, one economic status for all members of the tribe, one set of loyalties, one group of customs and traditions, one religion, and as a result a deadly monotony of personality. There was no serious conflict of opinion, since all

conformed to the customary way, no disobedience since no contrary courses of action were suggested, no stimulus to initiative and thought. There was no progress. There was relatively little for an adolescent to grow into apart from his physical maturity and the changed relationships that grew out of it. He had no independent life as an individual, but merged his whole being in the group life and thought of the tribe. As an individual he was practically non-existent.

2. **Youth in Our Society.** In contrast our young people grow up in a constantly and marvelously enlarging environment, due in part to the present means of transportation and communication, and they belong to a whole series of competing and overlapping social groups. Take for example your high school boy. He is a member of a family, with its loyalties, traditions, ideals, and attitudes. He is a resident of a community, of a State, of a nation. He attends a particular school, is a member of a certain class, is on the football-team and the dramatic club, and belongs to a fraternity, or the Hi-Y, or both. He is a member of a church, belongs to an organized Sunday-school class, and to the young people's society. As he passes from one of these groups to another, he is expected to shift his loyalties, his point of view, and his attitudes to correspond. And among these groups there may be not only serious competition for his time and strength, but actual conflict of ideals and principles.

This very competition intensifies his own consciousness as an individual, for he is brought to

realize that it is he, an individual, that must decide between groups when they conflict. It is he for whom they compete. He may even choose to leave one group entirely and adhere to another. He finds also a social order that is quite ready to take cognizance of his presence, schools organized for his needs, industry ready to exploit his youth and inexperience, commercialized amusements eager to profit by his desire for fun, a church anxious to enlist his cooperation. Surely "no man liveth unto himself"! A grave danger for young people, as for adults, today is over-organization and consequent superficiality of living. But this desire to belong is fundamental in human life, and the adolescent finds many social institutions old and new awaiting him. We must consider in particular a few of these to which youth is related.

II. RELATION OF YOUTH TO THE PRINCIPAL SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS

1. **The Home.** The adolescent's home is a "primary group" in a new relationship. In fact, when the boy or girl left early childhood, the home gradually ceased to be a place in which attitudes, loyalties, customs, and traditions become absorbed unconsciously. Instead, if father or mother should now express a wish or an ideal to an adolescent son or daughter, it might have to undergo comparison with the wishes and ideals of several other groups to which the young person belongs, on the same matter, and to take its

chance along with the rest of being the adopted wish or ideal. Furthermore in early adolescence is likely to come the first realization of independence, and this very freedom will often tend to lead the youth to seek experience apart from the home influence just for the thrill of novelty. Frances may defy her father and go to the dance, or may slip away secretly, just to see why he forbade it. Formerly what he said was law. Now if he says, "Frances, I do not like that dance-hall, I do not want you to go to it again," Frances will probably say, "But, father, all the young people go there, and our club is planning a dance there next Tuesday." She may go or she may not. In either case, however, home has had to compete for her loyalty with an outside group.

Much might be said also regarding the weakening of home life and its consequent loss of influence in American society. City life, flat dwelling, the diversity of interests represented within the family group, the claims of industry, often upon mother and children as well as on father, the usurping of home prerogatives by school, church, public recreation, and the restaurant—these and other things from without rob the home of its old opportunity. Other groups have a chance to slip into first place in the young person's regard. Within the home a lack of intelligence regarding home-making, a lack of high ideals, a failure to understand youth in a new day, or indifference or unwillingness to make the transition to new home conditions, may render

futile such opportunity as remains. The mobility of our American population, our restless moving from place to place, means also that the home does not have time to take root in the new place. Or else through inability to adapt itself, it fails to thrive in an entirely new environment, as when a family moves from the country with its freedom to the cramped home conditions of the city.

Yet the home need not entirely surrender its young people. If ideals and loyalties and attitudes have been deep laid in the earlier years, they may still remain dominant above all others now, no longer through compulsion or ignorant acquiescence, but by intelligent choice. If the old autocracy of home life, in which father was a tyrant, more or less benevolent, and in which children were "to be seen and not heard," can give way to a real democracy, such as Doctor Coe describes in his *Social Theory of Religious Education,* so that the young people may have their share of both privileges and responsibilities and a voice in its counsels, youth may still sing, "There's no place like home." To the ancient Hebrew, religion and patriotism were one, for religious values permeated the whole of public life. The home was merged with them both. That is no longer the case. It remains possible, however, for the home to be the most nearly ideal expression of true religion young people can find anywhere. If it be of such character and worth that its loyalties and the loyalties of religion become identical, if its ideals be under-

girt with the sanctions of an attractive and effective religious faith, home need never lose its grip, and the home-making dreams of later adolescence may become visions of a new home after the old pattern. And even if a young person should drift far from his moorings, it is a well-known fact that no human influence is likely to be stronger in bringing him back than the memories and training of a good home. "Keep the home fires burning!"

2. **School.** An ever-increasing number of young people remain in school well into adolescence. School laws requiring attendance till sixteen, the junior high schools that bridge the gap and make the transition easier between grade school and high school, and the consolidated rural schools that make higher and better education accessible to larger numbers of boys and girls of the country, together keep many under school influence to middle adolescence who formerly would have been lost at an early age. But the process goes on, and percentages that have increased at an amazing rate pass on to college, remaining in classroom to the very end of adolescence. True before the World War, this has become phenomenal in the years since. America offers college to almost any boy or girl with brains, health, steadfastness of character, and freedom from binding obligations. Probably today, however, too many ill-adapted to the major purposes of college are found in attendance. It is popular to go. It gives a certain social preferment. But there is need that the educational process shall

sift more carefully and shall turn to business and industrial careers those who have no real aptitude for scholarship. Need also that the dignity and worth of many non-professional vocations be fully recognized. Perhaps need that the quality of the special vocational and trade schools be improved. As these lines are being written, there seems to be already indication that the high mark of college attendance may be passing. This should not be regretted.

For the young people it often becomes school versus home, with the complex and exacting social and educational life of high school outbidding the home for the student's time and energy. School usurps the place of home as the dominant group—and many homes are glad to let it! In fact, there is a real danger in some instances that a fond and willing mother, anxious to have her boy or girl enjoy school to the limit and afraid to stand out where the school perhaps should be opposed in its encroachment, may release them from all home responsibility and develop them into affectionate, but insistent, parasites, living off her unwise slavery. "They are young only once," she says, "and they must have a good time." It is not easy to keep a happy balance. College, if it means living away from home, brings the first genuine independence to many an adolescent, new intellectual horizons, new social relations, new opportunities, new temptations. Here the test will come as to whether home has laid the foundations deep enough for the structure to be built upon it in

these years. Independence wrecks some lives and makes many others. Yet who would keep youth in swaddling clothes?

But school is not, as is often supposed, a mere "preparation for life." It is that, but it is also life itself! It is a society within itself, in which may be found the contacts and interactions that constitute real social living. It should be a laboratory of social experience in which such experience may be had under ideal and controlled conditions, in this sense being a real preparation for the wider contacts of adult life. Unfortunately, however, in many instances the really formative influences of high school life exist apart from the mature control or guidance here implied. Student attitudes and ideals, student habits and practises, are powerful on boys and girls because they emanate from their peers. In too many situations also, because of financial necessity, young teachers are employed whose own characters are scarcely settled, whose ideals are not stabilized, and whose influence may be negative for good. It should be noted, moreover, that college life is not altogether normal life. The students are for the most part out of the normal productive life of other young people; they are largely isolated from the usual contacts with adults, and particularly from the presence of children and old people, and if the school be not coeducational, they are herded in somewhat monastic isolation from the normal social relationships between the sexes. Except for the fact that the long summer vacations help to re-

store the usual balance, there would be need of even greater readjustment to life than is now the case after graduation. The whole point of view has to be refashioned, when, diploma in hand, the new graduate steps out of the isolated group back into the environment that presents all sections of society.

3. **Church.** The church which seeks the boys and girls in early adolescence and which so many of them join, has been, however, traditionally organized and maintained by and for adults, particularly in its administration, its public worship, and its point of view. Probably this is one important reason why, on the one hand, so many of them fail to unite, and on the other, why so many that do join drop out of active connection before adolescence is over. In this new day when young people are asserting their independence as never before, the church must change its tempo, if it would meet the needs of the expanding life of youth, through organization, through program, and through purposeful activities. Many churches are making honest and intelligent effort to meet the situation; some churches are not aware that there is a situation. It is a large challenge! How best to serve youth and to let youth serve in turn, while at the same keeping the church, as it must ever be, a chronological cross-section of society, with every age represented! A study of the programs of our most aggressive churches will reveal the fact that for the most part much better provision is being made for the needs of girls than of boys.

But youth has many normal desires, the satisfaction of which may best and most readily be had through the church that ministers to it. Four hundred college young people were recently asked why they go to church. High scoring answers were that they went for devotional life, for inspiration, and for worship. The sermon, the personality of the minister, together with opportunities for social life, scored low as major reasons. The fact is emotional life, esthetic life, mysticism, idealism, and opportunity for service —these are normal adolescent needs, which will die out, if not satisfied, and the church can best meet these needs. In fact, the average American home has washed its hands of this responsibility and has left the church to meet it largely alone.

4. **Social Groups.** The gang, club, fraternity, and sorority represent different ways of satisfying the gregarious impulses of adolescence. The loosely organized gang of earlier years may give way to the more formal club, dancing clubs, bridge clubs, athletic clubs—almost any social interest will serve as a bond of union and a basis for organization. In school and college the clubs take the form of fraternities and sororities, with old traditions, intimate associations, and wide connections. All of these groups offer several kinds of satisfaction to their members. Because all are of one sex, about one age, and have common interests, the youth believes that here he will get an understanding, felt if not expressed, which may be denied him even in his home. He may be a bit of a coward alone, but he feels

strong and proud with his group. He *belongs,* and that is a fundamental human desire. He struts his club or fraternity pin because its exclusiveness and secrecy give him a prestige he otherwise might not hope for alone. Indeed so marked is this last consideration that the students in a mid-West college, noted for its friendly spirit, but divided largely into fraternity and sorority groups, recently voted that the most serious campus sin was snobbishness. Surely not one of the sins more commonly attributed to "flaming youth"! In most such social groups the boy gives loyal adherence to his group leader, whose personality, simply as one of the group, dominates the rest. Girls, on the other hand, as Miss Moxcey reminds us in her *Girlhood and Character,* are more apt to be held together by individual devotion to a common, often more mature leader. College fraternities are likely to give polite tolerance to a faculty adviser, unless he chance to be one of their own alumni. Sororities, on the other hand, are more likely to rally around and seek the counsel of their older associates.

In all this there may lurk possible evils and evident opportunities. Left without guidance, the gang or club of younger adolescents may drift aimlessly, or as likely may turn to evil pursuits. The weak boy is afraid to resist the strong leader, and so will accept the gang morality, while the group is bolder than its individual members and may commit depredations which no member alone would dare to undertake. On the other hand, a wholesome leader

who arouses real interest can attach a group to fine ideals and worthy loyalties, and may develop within them many a desirable life experience. This is the justification for the church's interest in Boy Scouts, Girl Reserves, and other similar organizations. This is the reason for including club-rooms in the plans of an adequate church plant. Not a gymnasium, which usually is a white elephant for any church, but ample space for church-fostered clubs of various sorts, in which the normal social desires of boys and girls may find wholesome satisfaction. There is need of this in rural sections where suitable gathering-places are not to be found, and great need in the larger cities where many meeting-places are harmful, if not actually vicious.

5. **Community and Nation.** Intelligent interest in these larger groups appears rather later in adolescence, with the development of more adequate social consciousness. But since it is an inevitable relationship, the interest should be cultivated and the ideals set up with intelligence. Before adolescence is over the franchise is given. In response there should be a civic pride, honest and intelligent participation in politics, a law-abiding spirit, and genuine patriotism. Both privileges and obligations are involved, and he will make the finest citizen who has been trained to meet his responsibilities intelligently and loyally, rather than merely to demand his rights insistently. The state has always considered it its right to draft for military purposes all young men of late adolescent age. Probably the solu-

tion of the moral problem of war should be earnestly sought in some other time and manner than by resistance when war actually arises, and these young men should generally respond when the call to arms is sounded, unless they have previously registered their purpose to refrain from war. With such large questions involved, a curriculum of religious education for young people that does not include some courses that give a Christian interpretation of patriotism and of civic privilege and obligation is sadly incomplete. Nor need we wait till late adolescence to begin to deal with these important matters. Attitudes may be cultivated from a much earlier age.

6. **Industry.** By middle adolescence boys and girls begin to be capable of taking some part in industry. Many now enter it through necessity, some by choice. Whichever be the reason, many industries eagerly seek these boys and girls because they can easily learn the mechanical operation of tending a machine, while, on the ground of their youth, they may be paid a lower wage. In any case a "job" becomes a competitor with the school for the interest of both boys and girls, for it makes great appeal through its offer of independence and apparently earlier attainment of manhood and womanhood. It may release the young person from an unhappy home situation, may offer the means for more thrilling recreation, or may open the way to an independent home for the love-lorn, as the case may be. As a matter of fact, these young people become elements in one of the major social prob-

lems of modern life, the industrial problem, while scarcely aware that there is such a problem. Indeed, by accepting lower wages they seriously crowd the older workers. Easily the youth becomes a cog in a machine and quickly loses such initiative as he may have had, though, of course, great numbers never had capacity for self-directed enterprise. But industry is itself a great school for social training for those who can learn its lessons. And this school is today decidedly coeducational, opening its doors to girls and young men alike.

7. **Recreational Life.** This is in many respects a more important factor in adolescent character-making than is the industry which may be pursued, for it represents leisure time when youth is free to find self-expression. We omit here consideration of all solitary pastimes, such as reading and certain hobbies, and think only of social recreation.

With the coming of adolescence, the playground, where childhood played for the sheer love of play itself, gradually loses its appeal, giving place to those fields where specialized sports go on, such as baseball, football, tennis, and golf. These latter are contests of skill, now becoming increasingly possible because of finer adolescent muscular control. They also often involve team-play, more possible for the socialized adolescent than for the egoistic child. Athletics, too, of all sorts reach their peak of interest, when adolescent matches adolescent in skill, strength, and endurance, physical qualities that now are at

their maximum. And when the youth cannot himself so excel, he often finds his compensating satisfaction by becoming a spectator, a "fan," sharing the thrill of victory with his team or his hero, without paying the physical price for it. This desire has been highly commercialized in professional athletics, where for a price one may experience vicariously the exhilaration of the contest and the thrill of victory. The whole subject has many wholesome aspects, the time spent in the fresh air, the cultivation of cooperation, endurance, and perhaps self-abnegation in the interests of the team, the attitude of loyalty, and the spirit of good sportsmanship. At the same time it involves its share of risks. Great moral harm must come from the habit of betting, from the "will-to-victory" which stoops to any underhanded means to win, and from occasional display of temper. Religious educators cannot wisely overlook this phase of adolescent life.

Another form of recreation is found in general outdoor life, camping, fishing, hunting, and so forth. Part of the fun here is in experiencing the glow of healthy physical life in the company of a few chosen friends. But a more important element often is the contest with nature which is involved. The camper reduces his equipment as far as he dares, then pits himself against nature, whether she be in a kindly mood or hostile, and it is the storm, the rough going, the obstacles overcome that are the subjects of later boasting. Mature persons may continue these

things with increasing difficulty and caution, but it is the adolescent who gets the greatest "kick" out of them. The principal danger involved is that one should become such an addict to his favorite sport as to become unfitted for his real share of the world's work. He may, indeed, become unsocial, in other words.

Youth's craving for a thrill, noted in a previous chapter, has today been much exploited in commercialized recreation and amusement. And the lure of the box-office tempts the promoter to outbid his rival by any means, even to making a bold appeal to the less worthy and the lower, if not the positively evil, desires. And youth responds. He buys his thrill, often without counting the cost. The dance-hall, the movies, the pool-rooms, the recreation parks, and excursions may furnish innocent amusement and fun, but too often, as now promoted, they are filled with danger through excitement, promiscuity, lack of supervision, and wrong attitudes toward life. Even where otherwise innocent enough they easily tempt young people to dissipate too much time and energy and to squander their money beyond what is good. Religious education cannot hope to compete in any serious way, but can best meet this normal adolescent craving for a thrill by cultivating soundness of judgment and by training in self-control. To some extent it may also help to promote wholesome recreations, where they are otherwise lacking, and to help curb the evil ones. Moreover, the thrills inherent in religion itself are many.

III. PERSONAL RELATIONS TO SOCIETY

It has already been sufficiently pointed out that one of the fundamental factors in the relation of the young person to society is the new consciousness of sex. This pervades nearly every department of life in a subtle, but insistent, fashion.

A second powerful factor, growing out of the gregarious impulse and the desire for approval, is the dominant loyalty. As already noted, membership in any group involves some degree of loyalty to that group. Each of these is influential. But in each life one loyalty is likely to tower above all the rest and to dominate in any conflict of allegiance. It may be the gang, the club, the home, or the school, or it may be a single person, a hero, a friend, or a loved one. Such loyalties may be wholesome and uplifting, or they may be quite otherwise, and they need not be at all permanent. In fact there is likely to be a succession of them as circumstances change, each of longer or shorter duration. Less normal, but just as real, is the emotional attachment that may be formed for one of the same sex, the so-called "crush" or *adoré*. This latter is likely to appear among adolescent girls who crave attention and affection, yet who are shy of boys or unattractive to them. It is a very familiar phenomenon in girls' schools and colleges where the young women are isolated from normal social contacts with men. The relationship is particularly dangerous to the weaker personality of the two. In any case the attitudes,

ideals, and points of view are likely to be taken unconsciously from the object of this dominant loyalty and affection.

Middle adolescence is the period when custom and conformity are most powerful. Since Henry has not yet attained full independence, he seems particularly sensitive to what is the correct and accepted thing to do, and is fearful of the embarrassment from failure to conform. He easily adopts the attitudes and the prejudices, as well as the manners and clothes, of others. Even his morality and religion are likely to be customary in character. If the "fellows" boycott the Sunday school, he will scarcely be found in attendance, though if many of them are joining the church, he will find it easy to do likewise. There is something to be said in favor of mass movements in the religious life of young people. The youth in middle adolescence is in real need of help, that he may attain both independence of decision and a level of life higher than the average. He needs principles, judgment, control, ideals, and religion of his own. This goal may reasonably be anticipated for late adolescence, if the youth has the capacity for independent mental life and is so fortunate as to have wise and wholesome training.

For Discussion and Observation

1. Consider the effect on the children and adolescents when the parents become divorced or the home is otherwise broken. What positively evil effects? What losses?

2. What proportion of the young people of your church are out of school and in industry? What ambitions may your church help to cultivate among them? Can anything be done to supplement their shortened schooling? Are any in "jobs" that might be helped to "positions"?

3. How much does your local high school stress the idea of going to college. Should it change its emphasis?

4. How shall we best help the adolescent to meet the temptations that are inevitable in his social contacts? Shield him from them? Plunge him into them, as some advise, that he may grow strong through experience? By inhibition? By prohibition? Can the home anticipate these before they arise?

5. The "amusement" question is one of the burning questions for adolescents of all periods. What wholesome and attractive recreations are available in your community? What evil ones? What questionable ones? Do you know, or are you guessing? Are the dance-halls supervised? What church group ought to make a survey of local conditions?

6. If it be true that adolescents like to belong to social groups, gangs, clubs, fraternities, what organizations are available to your boys and girls? Are some of these young people left out because less attractive, less sociable, less able financially? What does your church do to meet this need?

7. Some say that the church should stay out of politics. Granting this, has the church any

obligation in preparing its adolescents to fill their place in public life? What can be done?

8. In what ways and to what extent should the church plan its life and activity with reference to its young people?

Bibliography

Bogardus, E. S.: "The City Boy and His Problems." Rotary Club of Los Angeles, 1926.

Cope, H. F.: "Religious Education in the Family." U. of Chicago, 1915.

Johnson, F. W.: "Problems of Boyhood." U. of Chicago, 1914.

Puffer, J. A.: "The Boy and His Gang." Houghton Mifflin, 1912.

Richardson, N. E., and Loomis, O. E.: "The Boy Scout Movement Applied by the Church." Scribners, 1915.

American Home Series. Abingdon. (Forty paper-bound pamphlets.)

Davies, J. W. F.: "Out of Doors with Youth." U. of Chicago, 1927.

Gary, C. E.: "Scouting and Religion." Macmillan, 1924.

NOTE. Among the best programs for the activities of young people are those of the Canadian churches, namely the "Canadian Standard Efficiency Tests" for boys, and the "Canadian Girls in Training" for girls. These offer well-balanced activities, covering physical, mental, social, and religious interests of young people, and have the great advantage of being the churches' own enterprise. There is in them much suggestion of great value for all workers with young people. Information regarding them may be had from the Canadian Council of Religious Education, Wesley Building, Toronto, Ontario.

CHAPTER X

THE RELIGION OF ADOLESCENCE

Have we left too little space for the consideration of this aspect of adolescent life? Or, on the contrary, is religion so vital a part of the whole of life as to be inseparable from the previous discussion of our subject? Surely we can no longer think of religion as a separate compartment of life, for special times and seasons, to be recognized or ignored at will. Instead it pervades the whole of conscious life, and so is present by inference in every preceding chapter. We live religiously or irreligiously whether we will or not. At the same time, while life is thus a unity, we must for convenience look at it from this religious point of view. Our interest is not so much theological, but rather is in the manifestations of religion normal to the behavior of adolescence.

I. THE MEANING OF RELIGION

1. The Search for Highest Values. In a very real sense we may think of religion as embodying the satisfactions which man seeks for himself, to meet his most fundamental needs and desires. For primitive man these were principally for food, security, and a mate, and his

simple religion centered round their satisfaction. But for every man religion implies striving after those things, whatever they may be, that are held to be of highest value, so that in a sense each one makes a religion for himself out of the things he values most. As man has ascended the social and cultured scale, he has realized more and more that the most worthy values are essentially social and spiritual. It is interesting and profitable to follow the Hebrews through the Old Testament and to note their gradual rise in the appreciation of the things of most worth. First they seek food in a land flowing with milk and honey, then security in a strong kingdom. Later Amos calls them to the pursuit of righteousness, and again the later Isaiah presents service of their fellow men as their noblest religious achievement. Finally comes Jesus. He challenges them to enthrone love in supreme place, for "God is love."

From his most primitive state man has felt that his satisfactions are ultimately to be found in some higher power on whom he has felt dependent and into relation with whom he must come, be that power spirit, or ancestor, or deity. His specifically religious acts, his rites and sacrifices, his worship and prayers, have all been for this end. The Christian finds his ultimate satisfactions and his highest values made personal in Jesus Christ, who reveals a God, whose will and purpose are essentially social and ethical. In him he finds the embodiment of those principles whose complete fulfilment would mean a perfect

social order, such as justice, integrity, brotherhood and love, and the satisfaction of all men. So he actively seeks fellowship with God, and strives after the highest values, found in the divine will and made specific in the teachings of Jesus concerning the Kingdom of God. Complete satisfaction for him is to be found in complete harmony with God's purpose. So Paul said, "For me to live is Christ," while Augustine expressed the same thought in the well-known and beautiful words, "O, God, thou hast made us for thyself, and our souls find no rest till they rest in thee!" Furthermore he believes that on his part God also is doing all he may to establish such relations with man and to achieve his great social purpose. Such a relationship should involve the whole of man's conscious life, all that he thinks and feels and wills to do. Thus the whole life is seen to be religious. It is life at its best.

2. **Religion as a Social Relationship.** As a corollary to all this, religion may be thought of as an extension of the social horizon to include God, the supreme Person. And this is the natural order, for the child is always conscious of the people that surround him, before he becomes aware of God. In fact, he comes to know God only as he first knows other persons. And this in two ways. Utterly unaided he would never gain any conception of God. For the very idea of God is a racial achievement, transmitted from person to person, from generation to generation. Or if it be preferred, we may say that God re-

veals himself to the child through other persons. Again, in his effort to picture God about whom he has heard, he imagines him in terms of the people he already knows, especially his own father. God is to him first of all a big man. And when at last he does know God better, his relationship to him becomes manifest in three ways: (1) A sense of dependence upon God. This is perhaps the earliest racial evidence of the religious life and remains always fundamental. Even the little child may come to feel it, and at the other extreme many of the great scientists of our day are swinging back to an acknowledgment of it. (2) A sense of responsibility to God. Early sacrifices were largely to appease the wrath of the gods or to keep their good-will. The earliest wrong-doing was conceived of as ceremonial, failure to perform all the prescribed rites for the gods. But later appears a sense of ethical wrong or sin, and the desire for release or atonement through a Saviour. Young people in adolescence are capable of feeling this. (3) A sense of fellowship with God. This is the highest reach of man's religious aspirations, and the greatest blessing offered by the Christian faith. Loyalty to this relationship makes all life dynamic and sets for it its loftiest goal. And these three relationships are essentially social, representing a rising scale of possible adolescent experience.

3. **The Aim of Religious Education.** At this point we may pause to give a working definition of the aim of religious education, namely, to pro-

duce persons capable of living joyously, strongly, and efficiently the Christlike life in relation to God and their fellow men. This puts personality first—boys and girls, men and women—not information or creed or institution. All agencies, programs, and activities must recognize this fundamental principle and must in turn be evaluated in terms of their adherence to it. It assumes a native capacity in each one to be developed to its full. It recognizes that there is a best way to live the life, and that for this living there are skills to be acquired as well as knowledge. It points Godward in spiritual aspiration and manward in social outreach.

II. RELIGION IN ADOLESCENCE

1. Religion Develops in the Individual. It should be evident from all this that religion is not a static thing, something that we "get." Instead it grows and develops, both in the race and in the individual. In the latter case, it grows with the expanding capacity to think and feel and act. Born without a religion but with religious capacity for moral discernment and spiritual aspiration, and for fellowship, the child cultivates and develops these as he does any other capacity, with his expanding experience and social contacts, till they become for him his religious life, till Paul could even speak of "my gospel." This development should involve, in the cogent phrase of Doctor Coe, a constant "revaluing of our values." The moral and spiritual

yardstick must itself undergo scrutiny from time to time and be made more adequate. He is no man who continues to judge by a child's standards. These must be among the "childish things" which he puts away when he becomes a man.

Such a religion as we have described may begin in childhood. It will then, of course, be very limited, because the child's capacities are so limited in development. The little one has no conscious needs which home does not supply, no values that go beyond father and mother. But as soon as he becomes aware of their limitations—for he finds that father does not know everything, cannot do everything, and cannot supply everything—he begins to follow the suggestion and the example of his elders and to turn to God for his more complete satisfactions. Like his moral life at this period, however, his religion is largely the result of external suggestion and control. He prays because mother has taught him to pray and nightly hears his prayers. He goes to church because he is made to. He imitates the religious practises of others. Thus there begins in him a religious sense and attitude. On the other hand, a child in an utterly non-religious environment would scarcely become religious on his own initiative.

2. **Adolescent Expansion.** But, as Doctor Ames says, "the period of original, spontaneous, and vital awakening is the teens." There is no break in the continuity of the religious life from childhood, any more than there is in the physical and

mental life. But religion, under favorable circumstances, may now become so much more significant that in contrast some even say that there has been no real religion before adolescence. The factors that enter to make possible this religious development have already been cited in other connections, but may here be summarized for their bearing on the present matter. They are:

(1) Expanding mental life, which now makes a personal religion possible. Reason and imagination may make even the abstract intelligible. Emotion may promote personal loyalty and attachment and those attitudes that are fundamental in true religion, both toward God and toward our fellow men. Decision may launch one on an independent religious career and keep one there.

(2) The more meaningful social life, the outcome of awakening sex, makes possible more adequate appreciations, and more Christian attitudes.

(3) A finer moral discernment, which is possible, if it has been properly cultivated.

(4) All of these together constitute the young person's ability to revalue his values, which, we have seen, lies at the very heart of the religious life. If Paul had told the whole story he would have said, "When I became a youth, I put away childish things, and when I became a man, I put away the things of adolescence also." Adolescence may attain this revaluing ability in marked degree, though the mellowing experience

of mature years should mean continual "growth in grace."

3. **The Peak of Interest.** In his pioneer studies in this field made some years ago, Doctor Starbuck discovered that there were three peaks of adolescent interest in religion, judged by the numbers that united with the church, at 12, at 16, and again at 19, the highest being at 16. These correspond roughly with the three periods of adolescence. The more recent studies by Doctor Athearn, however, particularly in his *Indiana Survey,* show 13 as the age of greatest accessions to the church. This fact probably means that, since the development of religion in the individual is socially conditioned, depending for its progress on the influence and the efforts of other people, the more adequate type of religious education of recent years is beginning to bear fruit, for, considering the religious history of the race, 13 appears to be a more normal age for religious awakening than is 16. The significance of this should be of vital concern to all who deal with young people, particularly with the Intermediates. We must plan our programs and activities with the expectation that at 13 things will come to pass, that the spirit within, as well as the body itself, will begin to expand.

III. THE ELEMENTS OF ADOLESCENT RELIGION IN PARTICULAR

1. **Sense of Sin.** We are not here considering the so-called "sins of youth," but rather the

reality of sin itself. This is a new experience. With the fuller awakening of the power of moral discernment and a more adequate evaluation of himself may come to the youth a sense of failure, of moral loss. As a child he was called "naughty" when he failed to obey his mother's injunctions. He was made aware of his fault because punishment followed. For the most part he was incapable of understanding wherein lay the real harm in lying, in taking the property of another, and other offenses. Now he may begin to see that in such action he has sinned against his fellow men, or he may rise to the conception of his fault as sin against God, against God's righteousness, against God's love. Conscience may lead him to say, in the language of the Psalmist, "Against thee, and thee only, have I sinned." In some young people, particularly of the emotional type, this sense of sin may be easily aroused, and this forms the golden opportunity for the traditional evangelistic appeal. A young man may find himself guilty of carelessness in view of his better ethical judgment, or the love of a thrill may have carried him into some excess. In some cases he will be in open rebellion against society and the moral order, and in a startling number of cases in recent years youth is even guilty of crime. But almost any young person, looking at himself frankly, may hear the voice of accusing conscience and may perhaps become a bit morbid. He needs to acquire more adequate moral standards and moral control, but his own insufficiency,

if realized, may make him welcome the discovery of a Saviour, and lead him to enlist divine aid. This is the distinctly religious contribution to his troubled situation.

2. **Conversion.** This experience must be noted here among the particularly adolescent religious matters, though as one of life's great decisions it has already been considered in Chapter VIII.

3. **Adolescent Doubts.** This matter, too, has already been discussed. Passing from the naive, uncritical attitude of childhood; entering on a period of greater intellectual activity; coming in contact with modern scientific thought in school, in periodicals, and elsewhere; discovering new and unexpected relationships on every hand, the intelligent youth begins to question. It is a wholesome activity, unless he become overwhelmed in the quagmire of doubt, for it makes religion a real and personal possession. Such questioning belongs largely to the latter part of adolescence, and, as noted elsewhere, is more likely to be the experience of the intellectually more able and privileged young people. No finer service can be rendered than to help youth to acquire and to keep an open mind and to think things through. For "the Kingdom of God is like a merchant seeking goodly pearls." And "every scribe who hath been made a disciple of the Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a man that is a householder, who bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old."

4. **Prayer Life.** If this continue, as it should, prayer may now become more personal, vital, and

intelligent. It should embody a deepening sense of dependence, a more genuine confession, a loftier aspiration, and should, in turn, bring greater satisfaction. Gradually, too, it may become less self-centered and attain a new social significance. Prayer for fellow men of other lands and for the extension of God's Kingdom in all lands may now be heard as genuine petition. But, on the other hand, any one who has observed the public prayer of college students must have noted how often the interests seem not to go beyond the local campus. Adolescent prayer may, however, reach its height in thoroughgoing consecration. But will it? May not many a young person, especially in the earlier years, need to utter the disciples' request, "Teach us to pray!"

5. **Worship.** Church worship in the past has been almost exclusively an adult activity. It expressed adult aspirations, met adult needs, and was attuned to adult capacities and experience. Graded worship is almost a new discovery. And while there should be universal elements in all worship, expressive of common human experience, and need for services in which all ages join and in which all find recognition of their common humanity, there is need also that there be some services designed especially for the requirements of each period of adolescence. The subject is too large for detailed treatment here. The student is referred to another course in this series for more adequate discussion. We shall merely note here those adolescent traits that bear directly on the matter. These are: Broadening

social and spiritual horizons; a new capacity for fellowship; new depths of feeling and of esthetic appreciation; enlarged power of reason and decision; more significant imagination and consciousness of the mystical; capacity for idealism and aspiration. Adolescent worship must not merely assume these and minister to them, it must also lure the youth forward into these experiences of which he is now capable, and so build up a vital and radiant religious life. This will mean participation on the part of these young people both in the preparation for the worship and in the worship itself. Only so can their own inner life find voice. Watch a summer camp group at an outdoor vesper service; listen to the singing of the great hymns of the church in a young people's conference; note the eager participation when the worship grips; and see how sincerely young people can worship.

6. **Doctrine.** In the latter years of adolescence in particular may appear an interest in the intellectual aspects of religion, an effort to scrutinize and redefine doctrine and to examine the foundations of creed. The interest may be purely argumentative, but very often it will be in finding a formulated solution to problems felt and to genuine need. This, of course, will be true only of those whose mental age has approached maturity. Every such person may become a creed-maker. The experience is wholesome, for creative doctrine is a steadying force in life. Our curricula are too prone to ignore the needs of this more select group of older young people.

7. Consecration. With the enlarging social sympathies and ideals of middle and late adolescence, religious life may attain loftier heights of true consecration, of loyal personal enlistment. Here we are in danger of dealing in the small change of the Kingdom instead of the larger coins. We are too apt to call ushering and singing in the choir "life service," and to keep the goals we set up too easy of attainment. There is opportunity now to present to youth a noble and worthy challenge, for some the call to full-time service in a religious vocation, for many more the call to intelligent, earnest, effective avocations, and the consecration of leisure time. Notice the serious earnestness of the young people that gather in student conferences on religion, the devotion of those who assemble for the Student Volunteer Conventions. These are the choice selection, to be sure, but there are others just as ready to serve, if only they get the vision and discover the place and the way. No Christian college should consider its obligations met that does not offer late adolescents that come to it for education a real opportunity to develop and train all the powers of Christian service, particularly for lay service. Training for full-time service should be sought in special schools and seminaries.

IV. PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

1. Relation to the Church. By all means we should capitalize the desire to belong, which we

find in all normal young people, and should see to it that the religious awakening culminates in church-membership. Only so can the great institution of the church be preserved for later generations. And only thus can these young people come to their greatest effectiveness in religious life and service. And the ceremony of uniting with the church should be made so significant as to stand out long in the memory. It should glow with stirring emotion, so as to give impetus to the new relationship. Membership should then be meaningful and satisfying, lest the reaction from the first ardor more than undo the good accomplished. Let us stress the place of the young people in the church's program, while remembering that theirs is but a part in an institution that includes in its ministry all ages of persons.

2. **Techniques of Adolescent Religious Experience and Their Values.**

(1) *In Primitive Society.* The tribal initiation for early adolescent boys, with its cruel tests for physical endurance, its secret and mysterious rites, through which the boy was admitted to the circle of the men, all of them essentially religious in character, must have made a deep impression on these neophytes. The desired end was secured, for the fear that was burned into the very soul of the boy kept him to the end of his days a consistent conformist in all matters of tribal religion and tradition. The technique was effective, though the end was not so desirable.

(2) *Confirmation.* This practise of many churches, in which the vows taken by the parents for their infant are confirmed by the youth's own choice, is often preceded by a preparation that is largely intellectual, the learning of a catechism. To be of value, the young person must understand the full significance of that which he is confirming. The step may easily become largely perfunctory, or on the other hand may be of vital significance. To attain the latter result the emotional impetus, which may so easily be lacking because no marked religious experience is demanded, should be supplied in an impressive ceremony of uniting with the church. This might even be elaborated into something of a pageant to gain the desired result.

(3) *Decision.* The Decision Day technique, which recognizes the incongruity of demanding a true conversion experience of all comers, presents a challenge to youth to make the religious life no longer vague and remote but personal and real, to integrate all of its desires, motives, and ends which have hitherto been scattered and ineffective, around one worthiest, all-satisfying center. This is very necessary. The emphasis is on volition. There is need that it be made perfectly clear just what the young person is asked to decide. "To accept Christ"? True! But just what does that mean in terms of the life experience of youth? What difference will it make? Is this anything more than an intellectual assent? May not one thus say, "Lord, Lord," while failing to do the things he says?

There is need, therefore, that the emotions also be stirred, either in the rite of baptism, if that now follow, or in the reception into the church, as in the former instance. Moreover, many dangers adhere to this technique, which have brought the whole procedure under criticism in some quarters and which must be avoided, such as a meaningless mass movement of a group, or the embarrassment of one not ready for a decision, or the misunderstanding as to what is being sought. It should never be carried out hastily or carelessly.

(4) *Evangelism.* Here, as already indicated, the effort is made to secure a radical and complete shift of life, from an evil or selfish value-center around which it has been integrated to the noblest and highest, to Jesus Christ. Enough has been said of this in Chapter VIII.

3. **Religious Activity for Young People.** The emotion engendered through thus launching out on an independent religious career demands an outlet in action. The early interest is likely to be practical, so the newcomer should be set to work to do that which is appropriate to his age and situation, remembering that the field for action is not bounded by the church, since religion includes every social relation. The young people's movement within the church in the last generation has been a splendid recognition of this religious nature of boys and girls, of young men and women. But its activities have been too often merely church-centered, too largely confined to lip-service, and too likely to be an imita-

tion of the normal expressions of mature religious life and experience. "Taking part" in a devotional meeting may have its value, but taking part in some helpful social project will have more. The "scrapping" of the young people's society is not here proposed, but rather the transforming of its program to give more varied and adequate outlet to the religious capacities of youth. Unselfish service is the securest anchor in case there arises a period of questioning and doubt. Adolescent religion can afford to be decidedly this-worldly, active, and practical. The leaders of youth today are more aware of this.

4. **Agencies Within the Church.** Space will not permit a detailed study of the various agencies within the church or allied to it for the expression of adolescent religious life. This, moreover, is the domain of a companion volume of this series.[1] Sunday-school classes, young people's societies and clubs, missionary groups, Campfire Girls, Girl Reserves, Hi-Y, and Scouts, to name only a few of them, may fill a valuable place in serving youth, each having its own emphasis. The best that can be said of them is that each may furnish opportunity for experience in Christian living under favorable and controlled conditions. But in the multiplicity of good things there is danger of spiritual dissipation through diversity of unrelated agencies. The wise church will insist upon a correlated program for a unified experience, even if some worthy organiza-

[1] H. C. Munro: *Agencies for the Religious Education of Adolescents.* Bethany, 1926.

tions have to be omitted, for adolescent young people are worth more than any institution.

For Discussion and Observation

1. What proportion of the accessions to your church in recent years has been the result of the radical conversion experience? Were any of these *early* adolescents? Any of them directly out of your Sunday school? Does your observation warrant the belief that during adolescence the church should reap the harvest of its earlier educational efforts?

2. Having seen its adolescents added to its membership roll, what does your church do to assure their continuing "growth in grace"? In view of the study of this text, what more might it do? What will be your first step?

3. Suggest educationally profitable religious activities for each division of adolescence that might be had within the church or under its direction.

4. Mary is 16. She is devout and earnest and wants to teach a Sunday-school class. Shall we let her? Why?

5. Get from a few adolescents of each period a list of some of their own most important religious needs and problems. What is your church doing to meet these? Do they show any tendency to "revalue their values" from period to period?

6. How may the challenge of "life service" best be presented to adolescents? In what period?

7. In what sense can we teach religion?

8. How can we help the adolescent relate religion and life?

Bibliography

Maus, C. P.: "Youth and the Church." Standard, 1923.

Coe, G. A.: "A Social Theory of Religious Education." Scribners, 1917.

Harper, W. A.: "Youth and Truth." Century, 1927.

Mayer, H. C.: "The Church's Program for Young People." Century, 1925.

Pratt, J. B.: "The Religious Consciousness." Macmillan, 1921.

Josey, C. C.: "Psychology of Religion." Macmillan, 1927.

Munro, H. C.: "Agencies for the Religious Education of Adolescents." Bethany, 1926.

Date Due

Jl 2 '44	NO 3 - '50		
	DE 21 '50		
Ag 9 '44	~~RESERVE~~		
N 10 '44	(Hom) Educ-		
O 3 '44	Psych. - Youth & Adult		
MR 2 '45	MR 1 '54		
~~RESERVE~~			
~~RESERVE~~	~~APR 1 '60~~		
~~(Hom) Ed~~	~~UNIVERSITY~~		
N 16 '45			
N 23 '45			
N 26 '45			
N 29 '45			
N 21 '47			
D 1 '47			
MR 19 '48			
OC 18 '48			

Princeton Theological Seminary-Speer Library
1 1012 01040 5514